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ENGLAND CHURCH

J. B. SYMES



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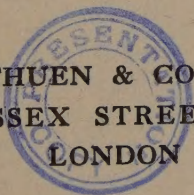
BROAD CHURCH

BY

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DEDICATED TO
UNBELIEVERS
WHO HAVE THE WILL TO BELIEVE.

PREFACE

ALL genuine Christians reverence the Bible, the Church, and their own reason and conscience. It is the question of the relative weight and position of these authorities which divides them into parties. Brought face to face with a theological problem the "Evangelical" at once asks himself what the Bible has to say on the subject. The "Catholic" begins by inquiring what is the teaching of the Church. The Broad Churchman asks himself first of all what his own Reason and Conscience can teach him. He knows, of course, that these are not infallible. He believes nevertheless that they are the channels through which God most certainly speaks to him; and he cannot disobey what seems to him to be God's message, although he realizes the possibility that he is mistaken. Suppose, for instance, that the Broad Churchman is considering the doctrine of Everlasting Punishment. If this doctrine appears to him unreasonable, or seems to clash with his moral instincts, he cannot accept it, whatever the Bible and the Church may say or appear to say about it. In view of the variableness of human judgments, we cannot expect those who take this attitude to agree with

one another in all their conclusions, yet there is a very large group of opinions held in common by a large proportion of those who are called Broad Churchmen. This book aims at setting forth these common convictions.

The Broad Churchman starts with the judgment of his own Reason and Conscience. But he does not stop there. It would be irrational to give no weight to the religious experiences of others, to the accumulated results of the aspirations and wrestlings of other men. The Bible and the Church provide invaluable materials in a Book and a Society for such an appeal to the religious experiences of the Past ; but of course these are not the only materials for such an appeal. They exist everywhere in Literature, in Art, and in History.

Many thoughtful people at the present day are repelled by much of what they believe orthodox Christianity to involve ; yet they feel a craving for some sort of religion for themselves, for the world, and perhaps especially for their children. A vague Theism does not meet their needs, nor does what is called Undenominational Christianity. There is much that attracts them in the idea of a Church, and perhaps also in a Sacramental system ; but they cannot trifle with Reason and Conscience, by pretending to believe what seems to them incredible. To such persons this book is primarily addressed. It is not likely to meet all their difficulties, but at

least it may help to bridge the gulf which separates them at present from organized Christianity.

It may be worth while to say that the word *Reason* as here used, must not be identified with the logical faculty. Such a judgment as "Honesty is the best Policy" is not more *reasonable* than the proposition "Honesty is good, whether it be good policy or not." The former maxim is based on inductive reasoning, which may or may not be conclusive; the latter is based on that mysterious faculty which is, perhaps, the most god-like thing in human nature. This faculty exists in different degrees in different people. It is developed by a life of moral activity, but at any given moment it seems to act rather by instinct or by intuition than by logical deduction. Similarly, it may be as *reasonable* to believe in a friend as to believe in a drug. The former belief rests partly on intuition, the validity of which we can hardly demonstrate, but which we do not on that account reject. We get at some truths by Logic, at others by Living. We want to understand God and Man in the manner in which we love, and not in the manner in which we argue or bargain.

Again, it is *reasonable* to attach weight to the opinions of experts, but in spiritual matters, spiritual persons are the chief experts, while the multitude who have lived and laboured and suffered, have contributed elements of experience which must not

be neglected. The reasonable Christian will check his own idiosyncrasies by the collective results of reason and conscience in the Past. Convictions have been subject to a struggle for existence, and to the law of the Survival of the Fittest. No one therefore is entitled to start as it were afresh, and to ignore the accumulated witness of the Ages ; though he may not regard this as a final and irreversible judgment of the most sacred and widespread convictions, he must still ask, Is this philosophically reasonable and morally helpful ?

J. E. S.

August 1913.

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GOD

GOD is primarily to be thought of as the Source of all Good. This will seem to most Christians inadequate as a definition. They demand belief in a Personal God, even if they have no very clear idea of what they mean by Personality. Reasonable as such a demand may be, an inquirer would nevertheless do well to begin by thinking of God as a Power discoverable in Nature, in History, and in our own hearts. When Wordsworth writes :

“ I have felt
A Presence that disturbs me with the Joy
Of elevated thoughts ; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of Man ” :

we feel that he is admirably expressing an experience which we also have in some measure known. Whether this mysterious power is to be conceived of as endowed with Personality is a question, the answer to which must partly depend

on what we understand by a Person. The persons with whom we are familiar are men and women, bounded by limitations of form; but such limitations do not seem essential to personality. The reason why we cannot regard stones or plants as persons is that they are not, so far as we can discern, endowed with thoughts, with emotions, with will. The gods of the old mythologies were Persons, not because they had human forms, but because they were animated by personal feelings, individual intellects, and especially by conscious wills. If a Greek personified a tree, it was by attributing to it mental and volitional qualities.

To call the Christian or the Jewish God a Person involves the danger of regarding Him as sort of magnified man. He has probably been thus regarded by many Christians and many Jews, but the rejection of such anthropomorphic conceptions need not strip Him of Personality. If the essentials of Personality are will, intellect, feeling, it is surely reasonable to attribute Personality to the Source of all Good. Otherwise the world becomes a purposeless collection of atoms and forces, among which those that we call good are merely accidental elements.

Now the belief that some *Intention* underlies the phenomena of which our senses take cognizance is deep-seated in our Intellects and in our Hearts. It does not depend on texts of Scripture or on

articles of a creed. It survives even the apparently unsurmountable difficulties connected with the existence of evil in the world. These difficulties haunt every system of theology. They are not to be got rid of by Undenominationalism, or Unitarianism, or by any other attempt at rationalization which stops short of either complete atheism, or of a pantheism which denies the very existence of evil, by representing everything as Divine. This Pantheistic denial may seem to satisfy the *Intellect*, or at least to be intellectually as tenable as any rival theory ; but it plainly leaves our *Conscience* unsatisfied. We need not only a God from Whom useful and pleasant things may come, but also a God Whose Will is Righteous ; and this, not so much to account historically for the existence of our moral instincts, as to justify them. Such a God was dreamed of or believed in by men of many races and religions, but was never really worshipped or widely acknowledged till He was proclaimed by those Hebrew thinkers who laid the foundations on which Christianity was afterwards built. Jehovah may have been originally thought of as a merely tribal God. Unworthy feelings and actions may have been attributed to Him. Even after His Fatherhood had been taught by Jesus, and His Character revealed in a perfect human life, false and narrow ideas continued to dim His Glory. Even yet, our beliefs about Him

are inadequate and often foolish. But human progress is constantly raising and purifying our thoughts of God, because if it is real progress, it is raising our moral ideals. To apply to God such adjectives as "jealous" or "angry," seems at first to clash with such ideals, but we must remember that love of things lovable needs to be supplemented by a hatred of things hateful, unless it is to degenerate into mere sentimentalism. Moreover, the inflicting of punishment may be a mark of affection, as well as the expression of a righteous wrath.

In arguing in favour of the existence of a Deity, Broad Churchmen lay special stress upon the presence of a moral law in the hearts of men. The Darwinian account of the development of this ethical sense is no doubt accurate as far as it goes. But the cosmic forces which have co-operated to bring about the evolution of Ethics suggest the existence of a moral purpose. If this were not so, then Conscience might be regarded as a thing which has had and may still have a social utility, but which the wise man must nevertheless recognize as having no authoritative claim on himself. Society might wish him to profess a belief in moral obligation, and the wise man might fall in with this wish ; but he would know that the transcendent claim of morality is but a fraud, unless indeed the force at the back of the Moral Law be

itself a Moral Force. Whatever we may think of the argument of the Psalmist : " He that made the eye, shall he not see ? " ; we must recognize that the existence of the Conscience, of a faculty which recognizes the obligations of Righteousness as paramount, is an argument for attributing Righteousness also to the ultimate directing Power or Person.

A belief in God as the Source of all Good, may be accepted at first as a working hypothesis, and tested by the experiences of that inner life which Christians call the life of the soul. The main difficulty will be found to grow out of the existence of Evil, which will again open up the great question of the Freedom of the human will. If such freedom really exists, if we can conceive of man as in any real sense free, and therefore responsible, we shall certainly have got some way towards the solution of the mystery. For when sin has once come into the world, the introduction of suffering, in order to fulfil the Divine purpose of ultimately eliminating both sin and suffering, is at least conceivable. We can dimly realize the difficulty of such a redemption of the world ; but we cannot dogmatize as to the amount or the kind of suffering that may be necessary for securing it.

The practical question is not whether this, or any other solution of the problem, is logically convincing ; for we have to face the alternative problem

that either there is no God, in the sense in which Christians use the word, or else His existence is somehow compatible with the presence of evil in the world. To many people the difficulties of atheism are so great that they think it rational to prefer the latter alternative. Others take refuge in pure agnosticism, but such a refusal to arrive at a conviction cannot alter facts. Our agnosticism cannot affect the existence of God. He will continue to be the Source of whatever of Good is to be found in Atheists and Agnostics, as well as in Believers.

Modern evolutionary philosophy has to some extent modified both our conception of God and of the nature of the evidence of His existence. But the modification has not been fundamental. We now think of Him more as working through the actions and reactions of Nature. But, if the old conception of creation implied a Creator, the new conception of Evolution equally implies an Evolutor. The problem is not of the *How* but of the *Why*; of whether these forces are working in a haphazard way or towards a pre-determined end. Broad Churchmen, of course, accept the scientific doctrine of Evolution. But they agree with Dr Wallace that the study of the evolution of the World suggests the existence of a Creative Power, a Directive Mind, and an Ultimate Purpose; and that part at least of this ultimate purpose is

the development of mankind for an enduring Spiritual Existence.

All further questions as to the Nature of God must be reserved till a later part of this investigation. Such problems as are suggested by the doctrines of the Trinity and the Atonement will be better understood when we have dealt more fully with what may be called Natural Religion.

THE INCARNATION

THE birth of every child involves a bundle of mysteries. There is the mystery of Life, which runs through all the animal and vegetable kingdoms. There are the greater mysteries of consciousness and conscience—things of which we can discern no evidence in the newly born babe, but which we cannot but believe to exist in germ, with other germs of mental and spiritual activity. It is difficult to believe that such things can grow out of material atoms; but even if they did do so, such growth would not dispel the mystery. To speak of the soul as a distinct entity is hardly justifiable. Yet, for practical purposes, this old-fashioned conception is at least convenient; and if we adopt it, we shall probably regard the belief in its pre-existence—before the birth of the body—as at least plausible. In that case, we might speak of birth as an incarnation, and say that the soul at birth clothes itself in flesh and blood, thus becoming what we call a human being. On this theory, every birth is an incarnation; and this is equally so if we regard our spirits as off-shoots from the Eternal Spirit, rather than as pre-existent

individualities. Again, every human being may be said to have a double nature. On the one side of his nature man is, as his bodily structure indicates, akin to the animals. He has probably been evolved from some ancestor who had neither consciousness nor conscience, nor any of the higher attributes of humanity. But, on the other side of his nature, man is a spirit, even as God is a Spirit. In addition to his human father, he has a Heavenly Father. He is son of God, as well as son of man.

To many Christians there seems something blasphemous in the suggestion that there is an analogy between the Birth of Christ and the birth of ordinary mortals. But to others such an analogy makes the Incarnation of Jesus more credible. Whether we are to call every human birth a miracle, depends on the meaning we attach to the word ; but a realization of the Mystery involved in all life, and especially in all spiritual life, should open up a new sense of the possibility of what would seem incredible, if there were nothing analogous within the range of our experience. If, on the other hand, the natural and the supernatural are linked together in us and around us, we should be less disposed to reject the Gospel interpretation of the Nativity of Christ, namely, that it was a revelation of a God Who wills and loves, in a man like ourselves, save that He was without sin.

Whether Jesus had or had not a human father

is plainly less important than whether He was really the Son of God, the perfect image of Divine Goodness, so that He was able to say that whosoever had seen Him had seen the Father. God has no body or parts ; and no man has seen Him with the eyes of the Flesh ; but He is seen by the inward eye of the Spirit, illumined by " the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Such is the doctrine of St John. " The Word was God." " The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His Glory." Such assertions do not admit of logical or historical proof ; but at least the Incarnation so thought of does not conflict with our reason or conscience. It suggests rather an interpretation of Facts—facts of life and facts of history—which has seemed plausible to countless saints and countless sinners. If anyone objects that such a belief takes no cognizance of the good to be found in other religions, we may remind them that this light is said to lighten " every man." That God is the Source of all Good certainly does not disprove the fact that He has given His only Son to live and to die for us, in order to fulfil His Eternal purpose of saving that world which we are told He " so loved."

Those who think this doctrine too good to be true, can only be advised to add this to our " working hypothesis," and then to test it by their

spiritual experiences, and by the history of the world in the Past and in the Present. The Character of Christ and the History of Christianity are evidences, though not proofs, of the truth of the Incarnation ; and each one of us may obtain confirmatory evidence by trying to live on the assumption that Jesus Christ was Divine, and that He still lives as an unseen helper to all who endeavour to resist temptation, to aspire or to love. If we *do* the Will of God, we shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of Him.

One obvious difficulty in the way of our accepting the doctrine of the Incarnation grows out of the at least apparent limitations to which the Founder of our religion was subject. Such an assertion as that He "increased in wisdom," and that He was ignorant of the day and the hour when some of His prophecies would be fulfilled, suggest that the Incarnation involved some limitation of wisdom and knowledge. If, however, we believe that the Divine Essence or Substance was *Righteousness*, we may admit the possibility of any limitations other than moral and spiritual short-comings. No doubt the admission will be made with reluctance. The natural man craves for some infallible guidance, but it does not therefore follow that such guidance has been vouchsafed to him. The Divine method seems to be to give us adequate, but not complete, revelation. If indeed the revela-

tion were complete, there would be no opportunity of growth, no spiritual struggle, no progress.

Progress is the law of our nature, and progress was therefore to be expected in Him Who took our nature upon Him. As He grew in stature, it is reasonable to believe that He grew also in wisdom and knowledge. Thus He may have believed at one stage in His career that He would soon return in Apocalyptic fashion to rule the world. In this He would be accepting the Messianic beliefs of contemporary Jews, and applying them to Himself. His convictions would be true in the spirit, even if mistaken in the letter.

The importance of the Incarnation grows partly out of the fact that it proclaims the sanctity of Flesh and Blood. In contrast with religions that claim to be purely spiritual, Christianity glorifies the body, even while it asserts the pre-eminence of things spiritual. "Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God," proceeded to wash the feet of the disciples, indicating thereby that His Church must minister to the bodies as well as to the souls of men. In His last supper, He again brought flesh and blood into prominence, asserting a communion in His body, to which the Church was to bear witness, by Social as well as by Individual reform.

This assertion of the sanctity of the body came,

indeed, as a shock to many. Philosophers who thought of the flesh as the seat, if not the source, of all evil; sinners who had felt the chains of fleshly appetites and illusions; worldly men who resented the use of the visible for the service of the invisible; stoics who were striving to become members of a spiritual aristocracy and had little but contempt for flesh and blood—all these and many others were repelled by the new doctrine. At most some would admit that Divinity entered for a while into the Body of the man Jesus, probably at His Baptism, and departed thence before the crucifixion. They tried to escape from much that the doctrine of the Incarnation implied, by ingenious theories which dispensed with the idea that Christ's Body was a real body, that it was subject to our infirmities. But these plausible theories could not, in the long run, hold their own against the human need for a genuine Incarnation, against the feeling that we cannot know God as we crave to know Him, without an Incarnation which should make Him really one of ourselves; and that the object of such an Incarnation was the redemption from all evil, not merely of the elect few, but of all who share our flesh and blood.

The difficulties that confronted the Christians of the early church beset our generation also; but the human craving for such an Incarnation as I have spoken of, likewise abides. The sight

of any graceful or heroic action suggests the ideal Son of Man. Failure co-operates with success to point us in the same direction. Broken friendships set us yearning for a friendship that is unalterable. Imperfect human relationships keep alive in us a belief in the perfect, as it is realized in the relation of the Incarnate Son to His Father God; and of the Representative Man to his brother men.

INSPIRATION

INSPIRATION is the name we give to the manner in which God directly influences Man, on the spiritual side of his nature. If God be the Source of all good, and if the worst of men are not altogether evil, it must follow that all men are to some extent divinely inspired. The Book of Common Prayer speaks of God "from Whom all holy desires, all just counsels and all just works do proceed." It bids us pray that He will cleanse our hearts "by the inspiration of His Holy Spirit." Evidently Broad Churchmen do not stand alone in repudiating the idea that Inspiration can be limited to the pages of the Bible. But there is a tendency among many churchmen to water down the more liberal teachings of their own formula. "Yes," they say in effect, "Shakespeare we will admit was inspired to write his plays, but it was in a very different sense that the Bible was inspired."

Those who employ such phrases have little excuse for accusing Broad Churchmen of using words in an ambiguous or an unnatural sense. One inspiration no doubt differs from another.

The spirit of God breathes as He wills, and we see the result, though we cannot trace the course of the Spirit. In Shakespeare the outcome was different from what it was in Isaiah. But the essential fact is, that in both cases it was the same Inspirer, influencing different men with different results.

The process of thinking, especially of hard thinking, is, no doubt, partly active, but it also appears to be partly passive. To say that the thinker opens his mind for the ingress of Inspiration, seems a fairly accurate way of expressing what takes place. Whence come what we call the thoughts of a man? If we adopt the working hypothesis that God is the Source of all Good, we shall say that, so far as they are good thoughts, they must come from God, either directly, or through those elements in human nature that have been conceived by the Holy Ghost. The greatest of modern Russians said, in his last will: "I have had moments when I felt that I was a conductor through which passed the Divine Will"; and, again, he speaks of passages in his writings "where I know that Divine Force has spoken through me."

Admitting this, we might proceed to classify different kinds of inspiration, but for our present purpose it must suffice to notice that the particular kind of inspiration which we associate with the writers of the Bible is a revelation, or unveiling of God's character and purposes; of the signifi-

cance of Life, of the Present, the Past, and the Future. Such revelations are not indeed confined to the Bible ; but the unique characteristic of the Old and the New Testaments is the prominence of these revelations in them. The author of the first chapter in Genesis started perhaps with a Babylonian Creation Myth. He may have assumed that it was strictly historical, but he was anxious to get at the facts underlying the story. And the fact of facts was revealed to him—that it was God Who created the heavens and the earth, and that they were very good. Similarly the story of the Fall may be based on another Babylonian myth. The authors of the first and third chapters of Genesis were probably different men, but they approach the stories in a similar spirit. In the Hebrew version of the story of the Fall, there are revealed mysteries of sin and redemption of which, so far as we know, there were no traces in the original narrative, of which however we possess only fragments. Compare this account of the Fall with Milton's treatment of the same subject. Here the rhythm, the imagery, the diction are inspired, but the spiritual doctrines are little more than echoes, modified by what I have called the active part of thought—the art, the arrangement, selection, and rejection of materials. If no hard and fast line can be drawn between the Voices and the Echoes, this is only the natural consequence

of the two-fold nature of man, of that higher birth in virtue of which we call him an incarnation of the Divine. But someone may ask: "What about a man's evil thoughts? Are they inspired by some evil spirit, or are they the products of his own evil nature?" This is a question to which no satisfactory answer can yet be given. Some of the Bible writers, perhaps all of them, believed in devils who possessed the souls of men; in a Tempter or tempters; in witchcraft and similar phenomena. A Broad Churchman would have no religious scruple in rejecting such beliefs, or in regarding them as mere superstitions. Even the fact that Jesus spoke as though He shared such beliefs would not necessarily shake the scepticism of the Broad Churchman. He might take his stand upon the limitation of knowledge alluded to in our chapter on the Incarnation, or he might say that our Lord adapted His language to the ideas of His audience. On the other hand, there seems to me no rational ground for dogmatically rejecting the doctrine of evil spirits. A disease which a physician may treat successfully by means of material remedies, may yet be primarily due to diabolic possession. We know too little of the relation between the Material and the Spiritual to arrive at any certain conclusion in these matters. The hypothesis of a Devil seems to simplify some problems, and not to add to the difficulties of

others. The Church certainly condemns the idea that there are two ultimate and independent principles of Good and Evil, and appears to teach that God made the Devil; but the Church is not infallible, and if there are men who are helped in facing the mystery of evil by the belief that God has had to contend with an independent principle of Evil, they ought not to be told that this belief is inconsistent with Christianity; unless, indeed, they make their theory an excuse for transferring their responsibility to the Devil, and for refusing to recognize their own sinfulness. We have an analogous case in the fact that a man's misdeeds may be partly due to hereditary tendencies. He must not therefore claim to be without blame for them. Similarly the hypothesis of an Independent Principle of Evil, a power not ourselves that makes for Unrighteousness, does not necessarily deny the freedom or partial freedom of the Human Will.

THE TRINITY

NO suspicion of the Divinity of Jesus crossed the minds of the disciples during their Master's life. They were familiar, of course, with the idea of a Messiah, but no Jew regarded the Messiah as God ; and it was only gradually that the disciples identified Jesus even with the Messiah. The confession of St Peter was rightly regarded as a tremendous discovery, but a wide gulf separates that confession—"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"—from any acknowledgement of His divinity. According to the fourth gospel, it was the sceptical St Thomas who first leapt across that gulf, and addressed Jesus as "My Lord and my God." But the leap was such an amazing one, especially for a Jew, that many critics doubt the authenticity of this narrative. It seems, however, certain that within a few years of His death, the disciples were worshipping Jesus. When Pliny (about A.D. 111), officially investigated this matter, the accused Christians admitted that it was their habit "to meet before dawn and sing antiphonally a hymn to Christ as God." This was within about eighty years of the Crucifixion ; and long before

that time St Paul and other Christian writers had used language which implies that Christ was thought of not merely as Messiah, not merely as in some unique sense the Son of God, but as an object of worship. Some such passages were written within twenty years of the Crucifixion.

Whether *we* can reasonably accept this primitive belief must largely depend on how far an Incarnation of God is a thing credible to us ; and, if so, whether it appeals to what is most god-like in our own souls ; and whether it offers a solution of some of the mysteries of life, of history, and of our own spiritual experiences. To the broadest of Broad Churchmen, the verdict of nineteen centuries of Christians on this subject will not seem a negligible fact, and we have seen that the idea of the Incarnation becomes at any rate more credible, if it be viewed in relation to the fact that all men have a divine side to their nature. We have also a terrible dilemma to face ; namely, that the claims put forward by Christ can hardly be reconciled with a belief in His humility and reverence, unless He was indeed the Way, the Truth and the Life ; and unless there was a real meaning in the saying : “ He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.” The possibility of believing in the Incarnation depends of course on the belief that God is Love. Once grant this, and the question Why should God become Man ceases to present any difficulty.

If, on the other hand, God is simply the Absolute, the Self-existent, the Spirit underlying phenomena and the like, the question may well be regarded as unanswerable.

Our present purpose is, however, to show that a belief in the divinity of Christ leads logically to a doctrine which is at least akin to the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. Historically speaking, the Church did not formally define that doctrine for many years. But from the time when the cult of Jesus as God came to be accepted, Christianity had to recognize a certain unity between the Father and the Son. Evidently there could not be two powers, of each of whom it could be said that He was God, unless there was in them a Unity of Will. Two perfectly righteous beings must be absolutely at one, if they are also all-wise and all-knowing. To the Christian there was, therefore, no inconsistency in attributing, for instance, the redemption of man to the Will of the Father and also to the Will of the Son. The Athanasian formula that the Son is of the same substance as the Father was but a logical deduction from this, if by the word *substance* we understand character and will. The apparent obscurity of this phrase is partly due to the modern popular use of the word *substance*, which almost reverses its original philosophic meaning. The word has come to signify something material, and is there-

fore plainly inappropriate to One Whom the first of our Thirty-nine Articles describes as "without body." Substance in the original sense, means the mysterious something which underlies such attributes as visibility, tangibility, colour, and form. The *substance* of the Deity is, as it were, the essence of the Deity, which we believe to be Love, Justice, Purity, and the like. To say that the Son is of the same substance as the Father is therefore another way of saying that "such as the Father is, such is the Son."

To many people these speculations may seem to have no practical importance. But the dividing of the Divine Substance frequently leads to grotesque parodies of Christianity. Thus many people associate the idea of Justice with the Father, and the idea of Mercy with the Son. Some even represent the anger of the Father with sinners, as only turned away by the willingness of the Son to die for mankind. Christianity, on the contrary, identifies the wrath of the Father with the wrath of the Son; the love of the Father with the love of the Son. Whatever differences there may be between them, cannot be differences of character or will—that is to say, of Substance.

The recognition of this identity of Substance soon led some believers to identify the two persons. The Sabellians taught that God is but one Person, Who manifests Himself as Creator, Redeemer,

and Sanctifier, and is called by these three different names, in connexion with these three different manifestations. This doctrine, however, introduced an element of unreality into the Gospel story. The whole attitude of Jesus to His Father, implied that they were *not* the same Persons. He loved His Father and trusted in Him. He came to fulfil His Father's will. Christianity could not afford to regard such statements as anything but facts. Yet, if we had to choose between the rival dangers of dividing the Substance and Confounding the Persons, we should probably regard the former as the greater evil. Christianity was carrying forward the Judaic Revelation of God as a perfectly righteous Being. The value of the doctrines of the Trinity depends upon this. Any division of the Divine Essence leads to a sort of Polytheism ; but even this matters less than its tendency to break up the Moral Unity of the Father and the Son. To the question, "What sort of God do you believe in?" the Christian answers, "The Christ-like sort of God."

Broad Churchmen believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life, but they do not attach much importance to controversies, such as divided the Eastern from the Western Church, on this subject. The language of our Lord certainly seems in some passages to assign separate Personality to the Comforter, Whom He sends, and

prays His Father to send. It is just possible to regard these personifications as metaphors. If we accept them as literal statements, we have no means of testing them, and can only believe them on the authority of our Lord. On the other hand it may be noticed that St Paul nowhere attributes Personality to the Holy Ghost. Sometimes he speaks of the Spirit of God as equivalent to the Divine Influence, but as a rule he seems to identify Christ and the Spirit. "The Lord is the Spirit" he says in one place, and he constantly uses the two phrases "in Christ" and "in the Spirit" as if they were interchangeable. The Johannine doctrine of the *logos* similarly appears to identify the Word of God that was made flesh, with the Spirit of God that is the Source of spiritual life. The Jewish prophets spoke of their inspiration as a coming to them of "the Word of God," while St Peter attributes the same inspiration to the operation of "the Holy Ghost." None of this is inconsistent with the doctrine of the Third Person of the Trinity, as laid down in the so-called Athanasian Creed. But it helps to justify the comparative indifference of Broad Churchmen on these questions of the personality of the Holy Ghost, as distinct from those of the Father and the Son.

That God is a Spirit and can only be really worshipped spiritually, is a truth of profound

significance ; but the idea of a separate personality of the Holy Ghost is of far less importance. We believe that the Divine Spirit is helping us on our way towards Goodness and Truth, but if we substitute the words " Our Father " or " Our unseen Lord " for " the Divine Spirit," we do not appreciably modify our meaning. What the writers of the New Testament and the next generation of Christians say on this subject includes so much of the Athanasian doctrine of the Trinity as has proved spiritually and morally effective in the later centuries, and down to our own time ; and the further definitions introduced into the Creeds were not intended to add fresh doctrines, but only to protect the essential doctrine—the belief in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost—from heresies which endangered or were believed to endanger its practical, ethical, and spiritual consequences.

SIN

CONCLUSIVE as appear the arguments of naturalistic science against the existence of Free Will, we retain the feeling that there is within us a mysterious power of initiative, of choosing between alternatives which we recognize as higher and lower. We may yield to the pressure of our environment, or of our inherited tendencies, but we none the less feel that we could have resisted. And when we do not yield, we are conscious of a certain freedom in our choice, even though we realize that our power to resist temptation, such as it is, is due to help from a Higher Power which has claimed and sustained us. This is, broadly speaking, the doctrine of Free Will and Grace.

“Our wills are ours, we know not how ;
Our wills are ours, to make them Thine.”

Logically we may not be able to answer the Determinist argument, but logic is not everything. The most useful way of criticizing a philosophy is to see whether we can live by it ; and it may fairly be said that living is impossible without

a practical assumption of the Freedom of the Will. If this assumption is illogical, so much the worse for logic. But the Freedom of the Will implies at least the liberty, though not the right to sin. This power to sin distinguishes men from machines, and apparently from all the lower forms of life, however closely we may be connected with these on other sides of our nature. The spirit of man thus becomes the battlefield between Good and Evil, but man must co-operate with one or with the other.

Among the striking features of our age, are the attacks that are being made upon the Christian system of Ethics, a system which had come to be regarded as almost axiomatic by Agnostics as well as by Believers. Writers like Huxley and George Eliot were apparently more interested in upholding this system of Ethics than in spreading a knowledge of physical science or producing works of literary art. John Stuart Mill in criticizing the moral standard of Christians, claimed to be merely pointing to defects and limitations in conventional Christianity, as distinguished from the religion of Christ. Even the bad and the careless paid a lip homage to the Christian virtues of Mercy, Justice, Self-sacrifice, Purity, and the like.

This has now changed. Sir Oliver Lodge tells us that scientific people have given up troubling themselves about Sin. Tolstoi, insisting on the

supremacy of Love, has eloquently attacked the sterner elements in Christian ethics, bidding us, in effect, drop Justice in the name of Mercy. Nietzsche calls us in the opposite direction, pouring scorn on Mercy, Sympathy, Pity, and on all that he calls "slave morality." Numberless teachers, following along the lines laid down by Nietzsche, are proclaiming that we should reject Self-sacrifice in the interests of Self-realization and Self-development; while others champion more especially what they call Free Love.

Widely as these writers differ from one another, they would probably all agree in repudiating any Sense of Sin, at any rate in the old-fashioned meaning of the phrase. Whether they will succeed in destroying that sense in the hearts of others is at least questionable.

We may begin by admitting that many of these assailants of our Christian ethical system are calling attention to real and valuable ethical principles. Crimes are committed in the name of Justice, and follies in the name of Mercy. Self-assertion is sometimes, and self-development is always, a duty. Even the advocates of "free love" rest their case, partly at least, upon what we recognize to be ethical principles.

It is with the negations rather than with the affirmations of these teachers that we are here concerned, and our appeal is mainly an appeal to facts and to experience. A man may strive

to devote himself to the task of self-realization, and yet moments come to him when he knows that he has failed lamentably, criminally, disgustingly, in action, in word, or in thought; and that for such failure he is responsible—he himself, not heredity, not tempters, only himself. At such moments he will be conscious of thoughts and feelings which he has perhaps long ago decided to regard as childish and superstitious. He may even cry with St Paul, “Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?”

This falling back upon characteristically Christian forms of speech, occurs where we should least expect to find it. Even in Baudelaire and in Oscar Wilde, daring flights of scepticism are followed by bitter confession of sin; and even by occasional admissions that if Joy beautifies the Body, Pain beautifies the Soul. It appears that the sense of Sin is a psychological fact, independent of theological theories. It is even more independent of theories respecting Future Punishments. Whether these are or are not eternal, there is something of an infinite character about Sin itself. When Newman wrote that “the Catholic Church holds that it is better that the whole human race should perish in the utmost extremity of torment, than that a single soul should commit one venial sin,” he was paradoxically expressing that inherent quality of Sin which puts

it out of relation with other forms of evil, and which led Cowper to write :

“ Man disallows and Deity disowns me ;
Hell might afford my miseries a refuge ;
Therefore Hell keeps her ever hungry gates all
Bolted against me.”

It is evident from this bitter cry that the salvation which the poet needed was not salvation from Hell Fire ; and despite some declarations to the contrary, the same is probably true of Bunyan and others by whom the Sense of Sin has been most strongly expressed. They sometimes misunderstood their own needs, but at bottom their feeling was that they were already in a Hell. It was from a present state of mind that they wanted to be saved, a hellish state of mind, which they no doubt felt would lead them into a second hell, unless some power not themselves could save them from their sin. They needed a Saviour, and most of them at last came to believe that they had found Him. They believed that God would lift them out of their wretched condition of selfishness and isolation. In the language of Theology this is expressed by saying that they needed an Atonement, and believed that this was attainable. They desired to be at one with God, and they felt that they could not, by their own unaided

efforts, achieve this result. They believed that through Christ such Atonement could be gained.

The sense of sin need not necessarily take the extreme form that it took in men like Bunyan and Cowper. The sense of imperfection and the need of redemption are felt by many who have never gone through throes of spiritual abasement. Such men may feel that there is something unreal in professing themselves to be "miserable sinners." Yet they would shrink still more from the self-satisfaction of the Pharisee. They are conscious in their saner moments, at those times when they are most truly themselves, of omissions and commissions, the responsibility for which they cannot altogether cast upon circumstances or heredity. They have separated themselves from the Highest, and need a reconciliation. Again, if they turn from the question of their own faults and needs to those of Society round about them, they find there too, both sin and a sense of sin. The condition of the poor, the dominance of materialistic aims, the absorbing pursuits of pleasure, the restless discontents, the bitterness of parties and of class hatred, the ugliness and vulgarity of modern life, the indifference to spiritual things, the widespread pessimism—these and things like these remind us that a Saviour is needed to bring the World to HIM, in Whom alone it can find Peace.

ATONEMENT

THE Nicene Creed declares that Christ lived and died "for us men." There is here an obvious ambiguity, as the word *for* might mean "for the sake of," or "in the place of." This ambiguity is, however, removed by the words which follow, viz.—"and for our salvation." Here there can be no doubt as to the meaning of the word *for*, and it would be unreasonable to maintain that the sense is different in the two clauses. Now the assurance that Jesus Christ died for the sake of men presents no difficulty to the complete Rationalist, and it is the only statement bearing on the Atonement in either the Apostles' Creed or the Nicene Creed, while the *Quicunque Vult* only repeats the Nicene statement. The belief that Christ came into the world "for us men and for our salvation" has been historically one of the greatest Forces on the side of Good; and it is evident that Love and Truth cannot come into such a world as ours without undergoing suffering.

No doubt the Atonement means something more than this to most Christians, but at least it does mean this, and the place given to it in the Creeds

suggests that this has first to be realized. Whatever mystical element we afterwards add, we must first grasp the fact which associates our Lord with other heroes and martyrs in the cause of Humanity. The words "and for our salvation" carry us somewhat further. A man might perhaps die for men, and yet not for their salvation, though hardly, if the word salvation be broadly interpreted. A man who dies for the cause of liberty, dies to save men from bondage. Some die to save their fellows from disease or hunger, or any of the other enemies of Humanity. We believe Jesus to have died to save men from many, perhaps from all kinds of evil; but undoubtedly the most prominent idea in the passage we are considering is salvation from sin—from that worst of all evils which brings with it, sometimes a hideous self-loathing and despair, sometimes that hardness of heart which, to the spiritual vision, is still more terrible. Respecting this salvation we shall not find the same unanimity among Rationalists. Some of them, as we have seen, are disposed to repudiate all sense of sin; but Broad Churchmen heartily believe that the Life and Death of their Master were "for us men and for our salvation"; and we have noticed that this is all that the Creeds of the Church insist on our believing in the matter of the Atonement.

Many of the early Fathers regarded the Death

of Christ as a ransom paid to the Devil, in order to secure the liberation of those who had become his slaves. The language of St Paul gives countenance to this idea ; but St Paul only uses it as a metaphor which he applies in turns to the manumission of men from the dominion of the Law, of Idols, of Death, and of Sin. Such metaphors would be specially vivid in an age when the redemption of slaves was an everyday occurrence. Men are regarded as subject to the slavery of sin, but redeemed from that slavery by the Life and Death of Christ. But such a metaphor should not be forced into implying a formal payment to the Devil, any more than a formal payment to the Law, to Idols, or to Death.

The sacrifice on the Jewish Day of Atonement points similarly to the deliverance from sin, but its significance is somewhat obscured by the unfortunate mistake of regarding the Scapegoat as a type of Jesus Christ. The essential point of the Hebrew sacrifice was that two goats were taken, one of which was dedicated to Jehovah, and the other to the evil spirit Azazel. The sins of the people were sacramentally laid upon the latter and the animal was then sent out, laden with its burden of iniquity, into the wilderness, whence it could not return. The sins of the people were carried away to the Demon, their owner. In this rite, and in all the elaborate ceremonial which

accompanied it, the High Priest and not the Scapegoat is the type of our Saviour, and the salvation pointed to is a salvation from sin.

This taking away the sins of the world may reasonably be called a reconciling of Man to God. Our need of such a reconciliation grows out of our sinfulness. If this obstacle can be removed, we can return like the repentant prodigal to our Father's embrace. The father in the parable had not hardened his heart against the prodigal. The latter had but to come back to his higher and truer self, and the welcome home was assured to him. It is the consciousness of sin which causes man to feel that he has alienated the Deity: "Against Thee, and Thee only, have I sinned." The deeper the sense of sin, the deeper is the sense of alienation, and the greater the difficulty of realizing that He Who has been wronged can forgive. Man finds it hard to believe that one Whom he has deeply offended can still love him. What he needs is something which shall convince him that, in spite of his misdeeds, the Love of God continues. It is thus Man who needs to be reconciled to God, and it is the Life and Death of Christ which touches his heart, takes away the terror, and makes him able to believe that he can return to a Father. This is analogous to our human experience. It is very difficult for a man who has wronged his neighbour to believe that

the neighbour is not animated by thoughts and feelings of hostility towards him. It needs some act of a definite character on the part of the neighbour to convince him.

The second of the Thirty-nine Articles speaks of reconciling the Father to mankind. Most Broad Churchmen would repudiate this, substituting for it the Scriptural expression of reconciling mankind to the Father. Others believe that a rational though mystical meaning may be given to the words of the Article. "A perfectly righteous God," they say, "must be alienated by sin. Our own hearts bear witness to the separation that exists between us and Our Father. Our need is that He should be reconciled to us, and we to Him. The mistake men have made is in supposing that anyone can remove the obstacle, save only God Himself; or that His justice would be satisfied by the death of the Innocent in lieu of the punishment of the Guilty." Others would go further and say that, in a sense, there may be something, even in the theory of a substitution. When one man dies to save the life of another, he may be said to have effected a substitution. Similarly, if Christ died to save us, He was, in a sense, substituted for us. Not that the favour of God could be won by any mere substitution. The reconciliation is effected by the salvation from sin.

There is less difference than might at first appear

between these various points of view. They agree in the assertion that Christ came to fulfil and not to change His Father's Will; in the repudiation of the idea that Divine Justice is so fundamentally different from our ideas of human justice that it can violate the judgment of our own conscience, and yet be accepted by us as divine. No doctrine about the alienation of God must be allowed to interfere with our belief that God loved the world before the Incarnation; that He gave His Son to be incarnate and to die on the Cross "for us men, and for our salvation." All statements about the Atonement must be tested by these primary convictions, and not accepted unless they can be reconciled therewith.

Look for instance at the words: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father." Taken by themselves, these words might certainly suggest an angry Father being conciliated by an advocate. This meaning will seem more doubtful when we realize that the word translated *advocate* is *paraclete*, which, when used elsewhere by the same author, is translated Comforter. The idea suggested in the original language is rather a Friend and Helper than a Special Pleader. That we have such a Friend at the right hand of the Father is a reasonable ground for comfort, but not if the fact is made to suggest, as the Devil is always suggesting, that God the Father is our enemy. If the latter were

the meaning of the text, we should reject the text, but we prefer to interpret it in the light of Reason and Conscience, and of the general principles of Revelation. We have a *Paraclete with* the Father, *i.e.* we have a Helper and a Father, who co-operate in the saving of mankind.

The essence of the doctrine of the Atonement is that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself." We have here two distinct statements, viz. (1) that God was in Christ, and (2) that He was bringing the World to Himself. In the Death on the Cross, the secret of dying to live is revealed. The strange paradox of a Suffering God supplements the equally paradoxical idea of a self-limited Deity, and provides us with an evidence of the Divine Love not less striking than the Incarnation itself. Both doctrines illustrate the Fatherliness of God and the relation in which He stands to sin. He has made us free. We have misused our freedom; but rather than leave us in our sins, He has inflicted sufferings upon us, and greater sufferings upon Himself and upon His Son.

PRAYER

PRAYER to a god was originally much like prayer to a man. It was the asking of a favour, with more or less humility. It assumed a certain arbitrariness on the part of the person prayed to, and often included something of the nature of a bargain or of a threat. We are told that even at the present day Italian peasants will sometimes beat their sacred images for not having granted their petitions. The bargaining element is still more common in the lower types of religion. It intrudes into Judaism, and even into Christianity. Jacob's vow that if the Lord would give him bread and raiment and a peaceful return to his home—"then shall the Lord be my God"—is a naïve expression of the thought underlying many prayers. It was because the Jewish sacrifices were so often offered in a bargaining spirit that the Jewish prophets had to remind the people that God did not need their offerings and could not be propitiated thereby.

Then came the Master and taught us how we should pray. We must begin by realizing the fatherliness of God, and pray that His name—the

name of Father—may be venerated on earth as in heaven; that His Kingdom may come and His Will be done. If we ask for daily bread, it is because we believe that He knows what we need and would not have us lack it. We are to ask for forgiveness, but we must do so in a forgiving spirit. Evidently such prayers are near akin to worship and meditation. We ask for what we believe that God wills, for material and for spiritual blessings for ourselves and for others. It is not *my* Father, but *our* Father; give *us*, not give *me* bread and forgiveness and deliverance from evil. Moreover, we are to approach God not as slaves but as children. We are to have the confidence that comes from the conviction that He knows our needs and will give us what is best for us. These are among the essentials of Christian prayer. It is directly opposed to the point of view of those who say, "God knows what is good for you, and He will give you that, *whether you ask for it or not.*" If we are God's children, it is right and natural for us to tell Him our wants, and we need not feel that He will mock us by granting what we ask, to our hindrance, unless indeed such hindrance is really for our good.

Such considerations apply alike to prayers for material and for spiritual blessings. In the present state of our knowledge a prayer for fine weather or for rain, for instance, may seem somewhat

childish ; but even in such matters it is well for us to open our hearts and to express our desires, provided alway that this is done in the spirit of the Lord's Prayer, and with the genuine conviction that God knows what is best. We must feel that we would not, if we could, change His Will for ours. This is not to deny the efficacy of prayer. What would be best for us if we had not prayed will perhaps no longer be best for us when we have lifted up our hearts to our Father in heaven.

And, when we pray for others, we similarly must not assume that what we ask for will be literally granted. By thinking simultaneously of those others and of God, we are praying that the *right* blessings, and not necessarily what we think are the right blessings, may be bestowed upon them ; and we are also pledging ourselves before God to be true to our obligations towards those for whom we pray. If twenty boys are sitting for an examination, and their mothers are each of them praying that her son may come out at the head of the list, it is obvious that nineteen out of the twenty will not obtain what they ask for. We cannot interpret literally the paradoxical promise of St Mark xi. 24—"All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for, believe that ye shall receive them, and ye shall have them." Literally interpreted, this would assign omnipotence to believers. They can obtain anything they choose to pray for.

Evidently the prayer of faith must always be qualified by the feeling, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

The prayer of a righteous man avails much, because it makes him more righteous. His character is elevated by communion with the Highest. He becomes braver, purer, more humble, and more reverent, and these qualities are on the whole and in the long run elements of strength. Browning's *Instans Tyrannus* says that he was just succeeding in crushing his victim, when the man—

"Stood erect, caught at God's skirt and prayed;
Then *I* was afraid."

There are mightier powers in the world than Brute Force, and among these are the forces generated by prayer.

We have seen that the first essential of Christian prayer is to realize the fatherliness of God. When the disciples had been taught this preliminary lesson, Jesus went on to teach them to pray in His Name—"Hitherto ye have asked nothing in My name; ask, and ye shall receive." The Paternoster was suitable for men of all religions. The new command was specifically Christian. The Name of the Son was henceforth to be associated by the disciples with all prayers to the Father. This does not of course mean that the Name of

the Son must always be mentioned. Otherwise the Paternoster itself would be barred. But the Spirit of Christ, the effort to identify our will with God's, must never be omitted.

On the question of Prayers for the Dead, the Anglican Church adopted at the time of the Reformation a strict neutrality, neither approving nor condemning the practice. The medieval abuses connected with the Roman views and practice as to Purgatory and Masses for the Dead explain the elision from the Anglican formularies of all definite sanction for such intercession. Broad Churchmen, in regretting this elision, do not feel in any way prevented by it from commending those who have departed from the earth to the loving care of our Father and theirs. We know little of the Future Life, but in praying for all sorts and conditions of men, we include the generations that have gone before, and especially those whom we have loved and who have been taken away from us. We cannot share the Psalmist's belief embodied in the words, "The dead praise not Thee." We believe in the Communion of the Saints in heaven and on the earth.

THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE Old Testament contains all the Hebrew Literature that has come down to us of a date earlier than B.C. 200, together with one book, the Book of Daniel, probably written a little later (c. 170 B.C.). This was preceded by some Hebrew books not included in our Canon; but, roughly speaking, we may describe the Old Testament as identical with the whole of the surviving literature in one particular language, extending over a period of perhaps eight hundred years.

We naturally ask why Christianity gives so unique a position to this set of books. The Greek Literature produced within a single century, was in many respects superior to the whole mass of the Hebrew Literature; and in the latter there are many passages which contain little evidence of inspiration. To give an historical explanation of this state of things would take us beyond our present purpose, which is limited to the question of the moral and rational justification for what might at first sight appear an unreasonable preference.

The Old Testament is the history of the progressive revelation made to the race of which Jesus was born. The character of God was only very gradually revealed to the Jews, and the revelation was so inadequate that it needed to be supplemented by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, if we compare the Old Testament conceptions of God with those of the people to whom the Old Testament was addressed, or with those of the Gentiles round them, or even with those of the Greeks and other highly civilized people of antiquity, we easily perceive the great moral superiority of the Hebrew Literature. The Ten Commandments may be taken as an illustration. Six of the ten deal directly with ethical laws, relating to man's duty towards his neighbour. Three of the others are framed to inculcate reverence towards God; and, since He is proclaimed to be a Righteous God, these may also be regarded as ethical. There only remains the law concerning the observance of the Sabbath, for which Deuteronomy assigns an ethical reason; and this command to work for six days, and rest on the seventh, might itself be described as ethical and rationalistic, at any rate in comparison with the laws of most of the pre-Christian religions. Of the latter it may be said that they have very little to do with the moral and spiritual life of mankind. Myths, taboos, magic, ritual, and the like make

up such religions. Obedience is inculcated on prudential grounds, for hope of reward or fear of punishment.

Of all such religious forms and motives for fulfilling them we find evidences among the Hebrews. Originally Judaism was simply one of the many Semitic religions, possibly no better than the others. Even in the period between Moses and Elijah, the disputes as to the rival claims of Jehovah and Baal or other heathen deities seem to have had little moral or spiritual significance in the minds of ordinary Israelites. Elijah demands that the question in dispute shall be settled by evidence of Power, though in this he was apparently stooping to the popular view rather than expressing his own convictions as to the proper test. But in the centuries that followed Elijah, prophet after prophet makes the higher appeal. Baal had been renounced, and the dispute now lay between two different conceptions of the character of God. Baser minds regarded Jehovah as a sort of Baal, a giver of corn and wine, an organizer of victories, a supernatural potentate to be propitiated by sacrifice and burnt-offerings. To the prophets, on the contrary, God was primarily a Righteous God, who desired not sacrifice but repentance and justice and humility. The prophets regarded the degraded worship in the High Places as in effect Baal-worship. Unless the people will turn to God

in their hearts and lives He will turn from them, and Jerusalem will be overthrown.

In the period from the Exile onwards, we have a fresh development. Hitherto God has been thought of mainly as the national God of the Hebrew people; but now the claims of personal, as distinguished from national piety begin to be more insisted upon. Meanwhile the hope of a Future Life begins to arise, and the most devout of the Psalms are written. Jehovah comes to be recognized as the God of the whole world and not merely of the Jews. The message of repentance and the promise of pardon are sent to the heathen people of Nineveh. Even in the forms of false religions, some true worship is offered to Jehovah. "For from the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, My name is great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense is offered unto My name, and a pure offering" (Mal. i. 11, R.V.).

This development is obscured by the present arrangement of the Old Testament, and by mistaken ideas as to the date and authority of some of the books. It is one of our many debts to what is called the Higher Criticism, that it has enabled us better to realize the gradual progress of Revelation. Broad Churchmen regard criticism as one of the means whereby God is gradually guiding us into all Truth. Critics have, of course, often

been mistaken, but we can learn much from their mistakes as well as from their achievements.

The attitude of the Old Testament writers towards Sacrifices may be taken as a further illustration of the ethical character of their religion. Sacrifices appear to have been originally tribal festivities, at which the tribal god was supposed to be present, to partake of the banquet. Then there naturally followed the idea of propitiation. Favour was to be purchased or anger averted by gifts and by ceremonies. We find, however, that none of the Old Testament writers countenance any of these ideas; in fact, many of the prophets regarded such notions as so dangerous that they actually disparage all sacrifices. Thus Micah meets the question, "Wherewith shall I stand before the Lord? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings?" with the very definite reply: "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God?" So, too, Isaiah asks, "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifice?" and goes on to summarize the demands of the Deity, in the words, "Cease to do evil: learn to do well." And the later psalmists say the same—"Sacrifice and meat offering Thou wouldest not"; and again, "Burnt offering and sacrifice for sin hast Thou not required."

The prophets who wrote after the Return from Exile approve a sacrificial system, but only as symbolic of self-sacrifice, or as a recognition that all we possess is the Lord's. God does not need offerings. The cattle on a thousand hills are His. But it is good for the people that they should present to Him firstfruits and other offerings out of what is already His own. The whole ritual of the Temple was similarly valuable only because of what it symbolized. The obedience to moral laws and to social regulations was in a real sense the object of the whole Law ; but the ceremonial sacrifices helped to sustain the inner life of the worshippers and to remind them of the redemption and deliverance which God had wrought for their fathers, and was still ready to work for them. God dwells not in a house made with hands. The heaven of heavens cannot contain Him. Yet the reality of His presence will be better realized by the sight of the Temple, and by rigid obedience to appointed forms of worship. The exclusive character of Judaism was probably necessary in order to preserve the people from the pressure of heathen ideas ; and its elaborate ritualistic and sacrificial system was perhaps equally necessary to save them from the practical atheism of forgetting God, and of living as if He did not exist.

In the latest books of the Old Testament we find a new element. Groaning under foreign tyranny,

the Jews could hardly hope for a literal fulfilment, in this world, of many of the promises that had been made to them, unless indeed by means of some miraculous catastrophe of the kind that has come to be called Apocalyptic. In the Book of Daniel, which is probably the latest of the books of the Old Testament, we have the first complete specimen of a class of literature which greatly flourished in the following three centuries, and of which the last book in our New Testament is the best-known example. The other Apocalypses, Jewish and Christian, between Daniel and St John, are not included in our Bible. They, however, certainly did much to fix in the popular religion two important ideas—the looking forward to the advent of a Messiah, and the belief in a Resurrection of the Dead, to be followed by a Divine Judgment. Thus, in the Book of Daniel (xii. 2), we are told that “many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting contempt.” Job had already been driven to the belief in a future life by the difficulty of otherwise justifying God. Some of the later Psalms seem to foster a similar hope. Thus in the forty-ninth psalm we have: “God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave.” Dim and obscure as are such passages, their message of a life beyond the grave must be included among the justifications

for the unique position which the Church has assigned to the Old Testament. We must not of course ignore the fact that outside of Judaism a belief in a future life was very common, and that in some cases belief in a Judgment based on ethical grounds was combined therewith. Inspiration, as we have seen, cannot be confined to a single book or collection of books ; and the pre-eminence of the Old Testament certainly does not rest upon its promulgation of this doctrine. But to omit all mention of it in the present connection would be unreasonable.

The Messianic message is more particularly scriptural, though even this is dimly indicated in some pagan writings. But in the Old Testament this doctrine gradually became a very important feature. The sacred writers no doubt made many mistakes about it. Isaiah may have called his own son Emmanuel, in the hope that the boy would prove to be Messiah. At a later time his hopes may have gathered round a Prince of the House of David, who also disappointed his expectations. Such blunders, however, would be of small importance compared with the great truth that Messiah would come in due time, and would redeem His people. Even more significant are the prophecies of the Man of Sorrows, the suffering Servant. Bacon's statement that " Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament " must

be modified by the fact that the later prophets realized the redeeming power and the divine glory of adversity bravely borne for the good of others.

The immediate explanation of the inclusion of the Old Testament among the sacred books of Christendom lies of course in the historical fact that our religion grew out of Judaism, and therefore naturally took over the sacred writings of the Jewish Church. The Old Testament books are of course those "scriptures" which St Timothy had known from his youth up, and which had made him, as they are able to make us, wise unto salvation. It is worthy of notice that none of these books claim to be infallible, and that belief in their infallibility has never been included in the Creed of Christendom. Had this been so, Broad Churchmen would no doubt have had to say: "So much the worse for the Creed." Fortunately there is no necessity for this. The Church says nothing about Scriptural infallibility, though she asserts that the Bible contains all that is necessary for salvation. Broad Churchmen reverence the Bible, but they apply to its study the same critical methods as they apply to other literatures; not thereby losing their conviction of its exceptional worth, as a Treasury of Religious Experiences and a Progressive Revelation of the character of God.

THE NEW TESTAMENT

THE history of the New Testament is naturally less obscure and less complicated than that of the Old Testament. The latter was the product of thought and effort spread over eight centuries. The former was all composed within a period of about fifty years. In the course of the century that followed the Crucifixion, a number of Christian books and epistles were naturally written. Many of these have perished. Of the others, some are included in, and some excluded from what we call the New Testament. The task of discrimination, of collecting some of these writings into an authoritative Scripture, to be placed upon at least as lofty a pedestal as the Old Testament; the rejection of other writings that were, in their measure, inspired—all this was a long and difficult task. It was not completed till the fourth century, indeed in some sense not till the seventh. Until late in the second century we can hardly say that the Church had a New Testament, though the sacred books had, separately, secured a very authoritative position in the minds of Christians.

The earliest of the New Testament books was

probably the first Pauline Epistle to the Thessalonians. The book gives no hint of having been intended to form part of a Bible. The writer says that his *preaching* had been accepted as the word of God. As to whether his *writings* would hold the same position, he does not express an opinion ; but his letter seems to be intended to meet the immediate requirements of a local church, rather than to become a permanent authority for the Church at large. The later Epistles have a similar episodic character. Not one of them attempted to give a systematic exposition of the Christian Faith. They are often of a very personal character. They deal with questions of doctrine or discipline as these arise. Sometimes, however, they treat very fully some special problem, or some burning point of controversy. The Apostle's doctrine slowly develops. At first, the expected Second Coming of Christ is his central idea. Gradually this passes into the background. Christ as Saviour, and later, as the express Image of His Father, becomes the prominent figure. With the progress of the Church, new questions of organization have to be dealt with. The Pastoral Epistles differ much from the others in style and in matter, and for these, as well as for other reasons, it has been doubted whether they were written by St Paul. Even in the case of some other Pauline Epistles, the question of their authorship is under dispute.

While including them all in the Sacred Canon, the Church is not committed to the belief that St Paul himself wrote all the Epistles that have been assigned to him. This question remains open to argument. Few if any competent critics believe that St Paul was the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, which is assigned to him in our Bible.

Gospels began to appear between the earlier and the later Pauline Epistles. As the contemporaries of Jesus died out, and the hope of His immediate return to the earth grew dim, people began to feel the need of recording in writing the statements of eye-witnesses about the life and teaching of the Founder of their religion. Ultimately the Church selected four out of the numerous Gospels, and assigned to them that prominent position which had led many people to attribute to them something like infallibility. Their ascription to particular authors was not authoritative, but no strong evidence can be adduced against the traditional belief in the authorship of St Mark and St Luke. In the case of the other two Gospels, there are weighty reasons for supposing that, however much of their material may have come from St Matthew and St John, the first and fourth Gospels were not put into their present form by these Apostles. The first and third Gospels seem to be partly based upon the second, partly upon a work that has now perished, and partly

upon other evidence, verbal and documentary. The date of the fourth Gospel is still under dispute. It can hardly have reached its present form much earlier than A.D. 100. The same remark applies to the Apocalypse, though parts of the latter were probably written not later than A.D. 68. This book puts forward a much stronger claim to be authoritative than does any other book of either Old or New Testament, but the claim is made in a preface and in a postscript, which were probably additions of a later writer. The Apocalypse itself was excluded from the Scriptures by many early Christians of unimpeachable orthodoxy.

The "Muratorian List" is the name given to the first list of books recognized as forming a New Testament that has come down to us. It dates from the very end of the second century. This list omits the Epistles of St Peter, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Third Epistle of St John. It includes the Apocalypse of St Peter—possibly a misnomer for the First Epistle—and adds, with a qualification, the *Shepherd of Hermas*. Other lists quickly followed, most of them agreeing in the main with the Muratorian. Some of these omit the Apocalypse, and the Epistles of St John, St James, and St Peter. Origen, writing in the third century, includes all the modern Canon, but is doubtful about the Second and Third Epistles of St John, and the Second Epistle of St Peter.

Even in the fourth century we find Eusebius making three lists :—(1) the books universally accepted ; (2) the books to be rejected from Scripture, although they have hitherto been included by some ; (3) the books generally but not universally accepted. Our modern Canon is identical with the first and third lists of Eusebius, excepting only that he regards the Apocalypse as of doubtful authority. It was not until A.D. 382 that an important Synod definitely adopted the present Canon ; and, even after that date, different lists continued to be recognized in different Churches. After the Council of Trullo, in A.D. 692, differences almost disappeared.

The authority of the Canon must not, however, be based upon the decisions of a Synod or of a Council. These dignified bodies were only ratifying conclusions that had been gradually reached in the religious consciousness of ordinary Christians, and especially of the more saintly among them. The various books had been tested by the spiritual experiences of many generations. The sheep had recognized the voice of their Shepherd. Individual judgments and preferences had become merged in an almost general consent. Much weight had no doubt been given to the real or supposed authorship of the various works. Because St Peter was St Peter, Christians had a bias in favour of including in their Bible what was called his Second

Epistle. They forgot perhaps that a first-rate authority might do second-rate work. They were ignorant of the fact that this particular Epistle was probably not written by St Peter at all ; and yet, we may be sure that if this Epistle had not been found to be edifying, it would not have been placed in the Canon. Similarly, the antiquity of the books counted for much. It was rightly felt that the evidence of an eye-witness had a special value, and that those who had been in personal contact with an Apostle had, on that account, an additional claim to be heard. But antiquity was not everything. The *Shepherd of Hermas* was probably written before the fourth Gospel. Some eccentric individuals may even have preferred it to the latter. But in the long run it came to be realized that the earlier work should be excluded and the later work included.

The part played by critics in fixing the Canon should not be forgotten, especially by those who are inclined to resent the application of criticism to the New Testament. The methods of the early critics were indeed often mistaken, and generally inadequate. Even the mighty intellect of Origen was often led astray by philosophic subtlety and by erroneous and misapplied mysticism. But it may safely be said that the fixing of the Canon of the New Testament needed the labours of learned scholars and critics, as well as the instinct of

believers and the insight of Saints. All these were utilized by the Spirit that guides men into all Truth.

The judgments of one age are often reversed by posterity, but there seems no likelihood that the Christian Church will modify the Canon of the New Testament. The verdict of the religious consciousness of all the intervening centuries has ratified that which was so slowly arrived at in early days. At a crisis like the Reformation, when other traditions of the Church were treated with little respect, this tradition was more than upheld. The appeal from Roman Catholicism was made to the very books which Catholics had pronounced to be sacred, and the effects of later criticism have been to deepen men's reverence for these sacred writings, even though some critics have tried to discredit them. This does not mean that discussion is closed. There is still and must always be room for inquiry and scepticism. Questions of date and authorship and interpretation remain to be discussed. We are still far from agreement as to the significance and the limits of Revelation. We have modified, and are daily modifying our views of history, of morality, and of theology. No Broad Churchman would wish to hinder criticism of the Canon, or to deny the possibility of error on the part of Apostles and Evangelists. God's Last Word is not spoken in the New Testa-

ment, and every age must test anew for itself the foundations of its faith, as also the application of that faith to changed conditions.

A Broad Churchman would hardly remain a Churchman at all if he did not accept the fundamental ideas of the New Testament. We must, however, be very careful not to dogmatize too much as to what is, and what is not, fundamental. Jesus Christ, and not the New Testament, is the foundation of the Christian Church.

MIRACLES

BROAD Churchmen, generally speaking, have a bias against miracles. They object to whatever introduces or seems to introduce anything like a magical element into religion. They recognise of course that with God all things are possible, but they welcome opportunities of giving a naturalistic interpretation to incidents which are usually regarded as miraculous. The writers of the Bible wrote, for the most part, in an atmosphere of miracle, and were ready to believe on very imperfect evidence that the laws of nature had been suspended. If a day seemed to them unusually long, they readily jumped to the conclusion that God had bidden the sun to stand still. They accepted such a conclusion the more readily, because they regarded the sun as a mere isolated moving light, which could be arrested in its course without seriously disorganizing the whole terrestrial and celestial systems. With us it is very different. The great scientific movement of the last three centuries has given us a better idea of the ways in which God works ; and indeed one of His chief messages to our age seems to be the

revelation of the uniformity of Nature, of the improbability, though not the impossibility of any violation of it.

The ordinary educated Christian feels the great difficulty of believing in the literal truth of many of the Bible miracles; but he also feels the difficulty of drawing the line between what is to be believed and what is to be rejected. Evidently, by rejecting any of the alleged miracles, he is abandoning a position which from some points of view is at least logical. But the spirit of his age is too strong for him. Perhaps he refuses to face the problem. Perhaps he falls in with what is in effect the Broad Church view, by refusing to believe in any miracles beyond those which appear to him essential to Christianity.

In the eighteenth century, miracles were regarded as among the chief evidences of the truth of religion. Nowadays religion has become to many, the chief evidence in favour of such miracles as they are able to accept. Thus a man may believe in the Resurrection because he already believes in Christ as a Living Lord. Without this faith, he would at least doubt whether the evidence that sufficed for Paley was really conclusive. Much, no doubt, depends on our definition of a miracle. Etymologically, of course, the word simply implies the Wonderful, and it is sometimes used in this sense, as for instance by

Walt Whitman, when he says : " To me the sea is a perpetual miracle." No rational and imaginative person disbelieves in miracles in this sense of the word. The fervour of his belief will be proportioned to his powers of wonder and admiration.

Others again identify the Miraculous with the Supernatural, thus limiting the idea of Nature to part only of the Universe. If the laws of Nature form only a portion of the laws of God, it is not irrational to hold that there are forces more potent than those we call Natural. God, Inspiration, Freedom of the Will, and indeed all the higher aspects of religion are, in this sense, miracles ; and yet these are believed in by almost all Christians. Miracles, in this sense, are not so much contrary to the laws of Nature, as belonging to a region above and beyond Nature, though mysteriously in contact with her. Man is, from this point of view, partly natural and partly supernatural. Two worlds are his. One of them he can only partly realize, but it is not, on that account, any the less real. In fact some thinkers have maintained that only the Ideal or Spiritual is truly real, whereas the world of Nature consists merely of appearances.

A similar limitation of the realm of Nature is implied when we distinguish between Nature and Man ; when we say, for instance, that these two

are the subject-matter of poetry. This distinction is seen in the fact that Man can theorize about Nature, can, so to speak, put himself outside her ; correlating the impressions she makes on him, through his sight, hearing, and other senses, and forming general conceptions. His aspirations, his sense of freedom, "his divine dissatisfactions" seem to differ in kind rather than in degree from anything we find in Nature. Yet to say that Man is a supernatural being will seem to many a mere juggling with words. The fact is that words are inadequate to express our thoughts, and that our thoughts cannot grasp ultimate truths. Accordingly, what seems a simple matter to the ignorant and thoughtless is not so in reality. The plain man says : " Either you believe in miracles or you do not. Why not tell us to which camp you belong ? Why shuffle with words ? " But, in truth, none shuffle more with words and with ideas than those who pride themselves upon being plain men.

On the whole I suppose Broad Churchmen would say : We believe in the Supernatural, but also in the uniformity of Nature. We believe in Science, but we do not imagine that Science has completed her task. Some of the so-called miracles, though inconsistent with what Science knows at the present day, are probably not inconsistent with what Science will one day come to know. Spiritual

forces have more potency and probably more power over the material world than our fathers suspected. Already men of science are talking of a borderland, of telepathy, of *subliminal* consciousness, of thought transference, of well-attested appearance of the dead and of the living, which cannot be accounted for by the laws of nature as at present understood. Auto-suggestion, Hypnotism, Mind-cures have shown us how hard it is to set limits to the powers of the human will and of human personality. Such powers vary in different individuals, and a purely human Jesus might well have possessed them in a supreme degree. And if we believe in the Incarnation, it is still more impossible to us to assign limits to what Jesus might have done. Nevertheless, if Jesus came to reveal the Father, it is natural to suppose that He would have elected to work as His Father works, in accordance with, rather than in opposition to the laws of Nature; unless indeed some higher law, some law of Super-nature, intervened.

Take now the specific instances of the Resurrection and of the Virgin Birth. The Broad Churchman's belief in these miracles will probably depend upon the extent to which they seem to him necessary parts of Christianity as he conceives of it. He believes in Christ as a present and unseen Helper, not less truly alive because invisible.

Such a belief does not necessarily involve the conviction that the human Body of Jesus did not see corruption, or that the grave wherein it was laid was empty on the third day. At the same time it is evident that the traditional story gives an added support to the assurance of a living Lord. Historically it seems clear that the Christian Church was to a great extent founded upon a belief in such a resurrection as is narrated in the Gospels, and not merely on the belief that Jesus continued after Death to be a living, unseen Helper to His disciples. The evidence in favour of the Resurrection, as marshalled by Paley and similar writers, is not perhaps absolutely conclusive, but it may fairly be regarded as a powerful reinforcement to other considerations, and especially to the part which the Resurrection-story has played in the souls of Christians for nineteen centuries. Rash indeed would be the man who treated such facts as of small account, or who did not at least suspend his own judgment, rather than renounce a doctrine which has had such a history. And yet it must never be forgotten that it is the belief in a Living Lord, and not the belief in an Empty Tomb, which is essential to Christianity.

The case in favour of the miracle of the Virgin Birth is not perhaps quite so strong as that in favour of the Physical Resurrection of Jesus; for here, in addition to scientific difficulties, we

have weighty reasons for doubting whether the doctrine was really part of the oldest apostolic tradition. The silence of St Paul and of the earliest Gospel (St Mark), and of that fourth Gospel, which is so emphatically the Gospel of the Incarnation; the genealogies in the first and third Gospels, which trace the descent of Jesus through Joseph—facts such as these cannot be brushed aside as irrelevant. They suggest that the narratives of the Virgin Birth were later additions to these two Gospels. On the other hand, when we remember the place which this doctrine of the Virgin Birth of Jesus holds in the Creeds, and has held in the religious consciousness of Christians from sub-apostolic times down to the present day, it seems rash for any individual to reject it, unless he is prepared to reject the miraculous altogether. It may be granted that the Incarnation does not depend upon the Virgin Birth, and that the latter was not known to St Paul or to St Mark, or even to St John, since it seems almost inconceivable that if he had known it he would not have mentioned it. On the other hand, the doctrine was certainly accepted during the first century. It was felt to fit in mysteriously with the whole scheme of Christianity. It became a part of the Christian worship and the Christian Creed—an inspiration to Art and to the artless; a portion of Catholicism and of Protestantism. The wise Broad Churchman

will feel that though he personally may not see the necessity of this doctrine, yet there may well be a truth underlying it, which he will some day discover. But the Church should certainly not exclude those who are unable to accept the doctrine of the Virgin Birth, so long as they honestly hold fast to the great truth of the Incarnation.

The miracles of Healing form a separate class. Few reasonable people now doubt that many wonderful cures have been wrought through faith on the part of the healed, or again by some mysterious power connected with the personality of the healer. Now if we have in Christ a unique personality, we cannot wonder if some of His cures surpassed those of modern Faith Healers and Christian Scientists. If Death is not an eternal sleep, the revivifying of the dead may differ in degree rather than in kind from the curing of the diseased.

Again, the turning of water into wine is a miracle wrought every year by the slow processes of Nature, with the aid of human co-operation. It seems unreasonable to deny the *possibility* of achieving the same result rapidly, and by other processes; yet it would surely be equally unreasonable to deny that such stories may be merely vivid allegorical witnesses to the character of Christ. So too with the miracles of Feeding. That Jesus had compassion on the multitude, and set His

disciples an example, so that they should not acquiesce in the fact that many people have not enough to eat—this is far more important than that He did or did not work a particular miracle.

THE CHURCH

IT seems clear that one object which Jesus Christ had very much at heart was the establishment of a Society to bear witness to His Principles, and to help to realise them. It was to be a kind of Kingdom, though very different from the kingdoms of this world. The people of His Kingdom were to be bound together by love and loyalty to their King and to one another. They were to aim at a Unity like that which existed between Him and His Father. They were to think of themselves not as mere individual disciples, but rather as members one of another.

Accordingly, when Christ passed away from earth, His disciples set themselves to build up such a society, under the guiding influence of the Holy Ghost. They did not proceed to draw up elaborate laws or to establish a systematized organization. This was left to develop itself; to be modified by practical experiences and by local circumstances; to develop in the course of time into what was known as the Catholic Church. It was by no means a perfect Society. From the very first it included both wheat and

tares. But in its ideal aspect this society was the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth—the one Catholic and Apostolic Church.

The functions of this body were to be of two kinds—spiritual and secular. Under the former, we may include meetings for worship and prayer, for the Breaking of Bread and Drinking of the Cup, for teaching and edification. But from the beginning, these were combined with secular functions, among which one of the first was to be the bringing about of a better distribution of wealth, a transfer of the surplus means of livelihood from Rich to Poor. The Apostles began with a system of voluntary Socialism. “As many as were possessors of lands and houses”—the only forms in which considerable wealth existed—“sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles’ feet, and distribution was made to every man, *according as he had need.*”

This is, as it was in the time of the Apostles, the Christian ideal of the distribution of wealth: not an equal division; not even a division according to ability; but a distribution according to men’s needs. Naturally this bold experiment, this attempt to apply Christian ideals to a Society which included both Good and Bad, broke down. Some of the early Christians, like Ananias, tried to cheat the Society. Others murmured at the manner in which the distribution was made. The Apostles tried to

meet this difficulty by appointing seven men full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, to supervise the distribution. But it was all in vain. Human nature proved to be, as yet, unfit for an ideal system, and the brave attempt was speedily abandoned, probably within a few weeks of its inception. But its ideal remained the Christian ideal.

The establishment of the common meals, or Love Feasts, was probably an attempt to keep alive the principle. Men contributed to these meals according to their power, and partook according to their needs ; and the meal culminated in the solemn Breaking of Bread and Drinking of Wine, in which the self-sacrifice of the King was commemorated. But even here the frailty of men introduced abuses. In some places people began to make a point of eating what they had brought to the feast, instead of sharing it with their poorer brethren. This was a horrible preparation for the administration of the Eucharist. Strong measures had to be taken. The Eucharist was transferred from the hour of supper to the early morning, when it could no longer be associated with the selfishness and disorders of the Love Feast. But of course the fundamental principle that the Church as a Church was bound to fight against Poverty was still maintained. Almsgiving was not left to indiscriminate charity. A large part of the Church revenues were devoted to the Poor. The support of widows was specially regarded as a

collective obligation ; and when one church was especially poor, another would come to its help. Such efforts were a very inadequate substitute for the ideal system that had been attempted in the beginning ; but in view of the failure of the earlier effort, and the general poverty and political insignificance of the early Christians, it was all that the Church, at that time, could contribute to the warfare against Poverty.

On the spiritual side, the activities of the Primitive Church may be divided into Teaching and Worship. From a very early date meetings were constantly held for both these purposes. The meetings for teaching were public and generally of a missionary character. The meetings for worship were at first the daily Eucharists, to which only the Baptized were admitted. When the observance of Sunday as the first day of the week and the day of the Resurrection became general among Christians, the daily Eucharist seems to have been replaced by a Sunday Celebration ; and other services were presently added. Special weight was attached to the " hymn to Christ as God," which was perhaps an earlier form of our *Te Deum*, without the references to the Father and to the Holy Ghost. Next to Baptism and the Eucharist, the Laying-on of Hands was the most distinctive early ceremony of the Church. It was the outward sign, in both Confirmation and Ordination, of the transmission of the Holy Ghost.

The early Christians naturally laid very great stress on the Unity of the Church: that Unity for which their Master had prayed so fervently. The local churches were taught to regard themselves as one Body—the Body of Christ—into which they had been admitted by Baptism. They are further united by one Faith and one Hope. They worship the same Father and receive gifts from the same Spirit. They partake of one Food, and acknowledge the authority of one Apostolate. The conflict between Jewish and Gentile Christians seriously endangered this Unity for a time. But the crisis was averted by a compromise under which the Church's work among the Gentiles was separated from the Church's work among the Jews, while the unity of the several bodies was maintained.

The organization of the Church grew up gradually in the course of the century following the Day of Pentecost. At first the disciples were simply a part or sect of the Jewish Church. The first Christians were Jews who kept the Mosaic Law, and attended the services of the Temple, adding thereto the Preaching of the Gospel, Baptism, the Breaking of Bread, the Drinking of the Cup, and Confirmation. The Apostles were at first the only rulers and organizers, but they very soon appointed deacons to assist them, and especially to take over the secular part of their work.

As churches were founded outside Jerusalem,

some system of local organization became necessary. The Apostle who had founded the church—at any rate when that Apostle was St Paul, claimed and exercised some authority and powers of supervision. In extreme cases a difficult point might be referred to the Apostles at Jerusalem ; but local affairs were mainly managed by the elders of the little congregation, or by the congregation as a whole. Among the elders there would naturally be chief, who would act as Celebrant of the Eucharist, and Chairman of the Love Feast which usually preceded it. We have here, obviously, some analogy to and some difference from the system under which our own Church is at present organized. The apostolic supervision may be compared to or contrasted with that which a Bishop now exercises ; the presiding elder may be compared to a Rector or Vicar, and the other elders to Curates. But we hardly know whether to regard these elders as Lay or Clerical. The organization of the primitive Church was fluid and undefined. The very word “ Apostle ” was used loosely, not only as a description of the original Twelve, but also of other prominent missionaries, such as Paul, Barnabas, Silas, Timothy, and others. Our Lord is said to have appeared to the Twelve, and afterwards to *all* the Apostles. Many of the Apostles may never have exercised Episcopal functions.

The other official titles are used still more loosely.

The list in the Epistle to the Ephesians : " apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers "—takes no account of bishops, elders, or deacons. The word " elder," in the Greek form *presbuteros*, was probably contracted into the word Priest. The chief member of a local group of elders came to be called the Bishop, *i.e.* the overseer ; but he bore little resemblance to modern bishops, being, as we have seen, more analogous to the modern Rector.

As the churches founded by St Paul multiplied, and established daughter churches, the Apostle seems to have delegated some of his authority to men like Timothy and Titus. In particular, these two men were to ordain both " bishops " and deacons ; but the former title was ultimately transferred to those who exercised the functions assigned to Timothy and Titus themselves. Again, we may distinguish between local and general clergy. Among the latter we include apostles, prophets, and evangelists, who might be temporarily attached to some particular church, but were essentially itinerant, at anyrate after the fall of Jerusalem. The local officials who ultimately developed into bishops, priests, and deacons, seem to have been selected by a democratic vote. The first vacancy in the apostolate was filled up by the vote of all the disciples, except that the choice between the two candidates so selected was determined by lot.

Similarly, the seven original deacons were chosen by the people themselves, although they were instituted by the laying-on of the hands of the Apostles. St Paul writes as though Timothy and Titus were to nominate their own clergy, but probably, even in these cases, there was a popular election, which had afterwards to be confirmed by the rulers of the churches of Ephesus and Crete. At anyrate the system of popular election plainly prevailed, even in the case of bishops, in the age immediately following that of the Apostles, and for several centuries afterwards. It was necessary, however, that the election should be confirmed by the laying-on of the hands of the ecclesiastical authorities. This laying on of hands was sacramental, an outward and visible sign that all authority comes from above. Whether a man were chosen by democratic election, or by episcopal or other nomination, only God could give him the right and the power to exercise the functions of the office to which he was called. The theory of Apostolic Succession implied this, but it also implied the continuity of the Church through successive generations, not only back to the Apostles, but to Jesus Christ Himself, Who had originally appointed them. This doctrine helped to keep prominent the fact that the Church is essentially both the Family and the Kingdom of God, and that it must not be regarded as a mere voluntary association of individuals

for the promotion of certain desirable ends. As men are born members of a family and a nation, so they are reborn, by Baptism, members of the Church, the great Family, the great Nation. Whether, as a matter of historical fact, the Apostolic Succession has been strictly maintained in an unbroken line seems to Broad Churchmen comparatively unimportant. Most impartial and well-informed writers admit the possibility that breaches have occurred. Such breaches need not have involved any permanent breach, since it is usual for several bishops to lay hands on the head of each new bishop at his consecration. The rule that three bishops at least should take part in the consecration of every new bishop is at least as early as the fourth century, and was probably much earlier. If one only of these consecrating bishops had himself been properly consecrated, the succession would be maintained through him. But the really important thing is the underlying principle of continuity. The more strongly we believe in the progressive character of Revelation, the more we welcome any visible witness to the fact of the continuity of the Church throughout the ages.

But a Broad Churchman who values Apostolic Succession is not on that account disposed to "unchurch" Christians who belong to sects that neither have nor wish to have such succession. Some of these unchurch themselves, denying the

value of Unity of Organization, and regarding Churches merely as voluntary societies. Wherever the desire for Unity exists, it should be welcomed, even though it be not always accompanied by any willingness to conform to our practices, institutions, or beliefs. The present condition of our own Church shows what varieties of opinion can be included within the bounds of a single community. Broad Churchmen should sedulously strive, both to prevent any narrowing of this comprehensiveness, and to assert any real Unity that can be found between themselves and those who, for whatever reason, will not join the Visible Body to which we belong. It was of one who stood aloof from the Christians that our Master said : " He that is not against us is on our side."

SACRAMENTS

IF a Sacrament be defined as an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual fact, we may surely say that all Life is sacramental. A hand-shake is an outward mark of friendship, real or professed. We kneel to express an attitude of mind. The ring given in marriage is a symbol of a spiritual bond. Music, Painting, and Sculpture appeal through our outward senses to our souls. And the world of Nature, too, is full of visible and audible signs of an indwelling spiritual presence.

The two great sacraments of the Church bear witness to the two greatest of facts—the Fatherhood of God, and the Brotherhood of Men. We are not concerned with the dispute between Catholics and Protestants as to whether any change takes place in a baby at its christening. The fact that all babies are summoned to the Font is sufficient evidence that all are regarded as the children of God, at any rate potentially. If this were not so, Infant Baptism would be an absurdity. In the case of the early converts, conversion naturally preceded Baptism; but in the case of babies there is no thought of conversion. The baby, because it is a

human being, is eligible for admission into the Christian Church, as a child of God, a member of Christ, and an inheritor—not merely an heir—of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Similarly, in the second sacrament, Bread and Wine signify that Flesh and Blood of which we are all partakers. The spirit of Christ is the ideal to be aimed at, but meanwhile we are all made of the same flesh and blood, and to realize this is to realize our brotherhood and the fact that we have a common Father. This communion becomes through the sacrament a Holy Communion, assuring us that we are very members incorporate in the mystical Body which is the company of all Faithful People.

Here, again, Broad Churchmen are not concerned with controversies about the so-called Real Presence. All Christians believe in the Real Presence of Christ, not only in the Sacrament, but in all places and at all times. Presence, be it noted, does not admit of degrees of comparison. Neither God nor man can be more present than present. It is in the matter of our realization of the presence that degrees of comparison become possible. The Sacrament is intended to help us to realize that Presence of Christ which is none the less a reality, whether we realize it or not. So, too, with reference to the sacrificial element in the Eucharist. We offer up the Bread and Wine in token that all we have is God's. We offer up our souls and bodies as a

reasonable offering, accepting thus the law of self-sacrifice which was made manifest in the Crucifixion, and which runs through all creation. We regard all human sacrifice as summed up in the one great sacrifice offered up by the Representative of all Humanity, in fulfilment of His Father's will.

These elementary considerations are, of course, not peculiar to Broad Churchmen. There are, indeed, the widest difference among these latter in their attitude towards the Sacraments. Some lean to the more mystical, some to the more rationalistic view ; but the points which I have tried to bring out indicate a common ground far more important than any such differences. We do not know whether Our Lord really said : " Cleave the wood and find Me there ; raise the stone, and there am I " ; but the attribution of the words to Him is very ancient, and on the face of it at least plausible. The words plainly imply the Real Presence of Christ in the wood and in the stone, and therefore not merely in the Sacramental Bread and Wine. A belief in the magical efficacy of the Sacraments is alien from the point of view of both Catholic and Protestant Broad Churchmen, for Magic is equally repugnant to Mystics and Rationalists.

The recorded words of Jesus on the subject of the two Sacraments which He instituted are very insistent. Not only are Christians to eat and drink the Eucharistic Elements and to baptize all

nations ; but it is implied that these sacraments are absolutely essential. " Except a man be born of *Water* and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." " Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." Jesus is said to have made these statements some time before either Christian Baptism or the Holy Eucharist had been instituted. This implies that their institution was not arbitrary ; that it rested on universal principles which existed equally before the sacraments. Thus it bars the notion that the only way in which men could feed on His Body and Blood, and be baptized with His Baptism was the way which He afterwards appointed for His disciples to use. The essential conditions for membership of the Church must not be confused with the qualification for membership of the Church Invisible, the blessed company of the Pure, the Just, and the Loving.

Catholicism includes five other sacraments with the two specially ordained by the Founder of Christianity. Broad Churchmen gladly accept such inclusion, but they decline to limit the number to seven. They recognize a sacrament, wherever spiritual grace is conveyed by means of outward forms. And of such sacraments there are not seven only, but seventy times seven.

FUTURE LIFE

BELIEF in a life beyond the Grave is so widespread as to be almost universal. Some people, of course, deny or doubt it, but from the animistic religions of savages up to the purest forms of Theism, almost all religions include some belief in a Future Life. In the philosophies of Greece and of the East, this doctrine is generally combined with a belief that, as we shall live after death, so also we were living before being born into this world. In many cases it was held that our existence here is a punishment for sins committed in a previous state. This point of view generally implied a disparagement of the body. The soul was regarded as divine; the body as a prison, in which the soul was confined, as a punishment for past sins.

Of the many philosophers who have attempted some proof of Immortality, Plato is the most famous, and it is interesting to notice that in his different dialogues, he brings forward very different "proofs." Many of these must be admitted to be but, at best, ingenious suggestions, which it is impossible to test. That the soul is self-moving and indivisible may or

may not be true. If true, it may or may not follow that death is impossible. In the *Timæus*, however, Plato advances the argument that most appeals to Christians. Immortality is there connected with the benevolence of God. If such benevolence exists, we may reasonably conclude that God will not suffer those whom He loves to perish utterly. This is essentially the argument of Jesus. If God is the God of Abraham, the relation between them must surely be of such a kind, that Abraham cannot be annihilated. A God such as Christ revealed cannot be a God of the dead. All His loved ones must live in Him.

The argument may then be extended to all men, since God is the God of all men. Jesus says on another occasion : " I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me " ; and St Paul declares that, " As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Broad Churchmen attach little weight to the mere quoting of texts. It is only because the above passages make so convincing an appeal to Reason and to Conscience that they are here referred to. It would be easy, of course, to quote other passages which seem to limit this great salvation, this being made alive in Christ, to a few, or at any rate to a portion only of the human race. The conviction that there will never come a time when men can sin with impunity may explain the use of such phrases as Everlasting Fire, or Everlasting

Death. They are certainly not to be explained away. They point to important truths which we can only at our peril ignore ; but they do not, of course, imply that those cast into the Everlasting Fire can never be brought out of it. Such a view would be a flat contradiction of the assertion that the Mercy of God endures for ever. The attitude of the " religious world " of the present day towards the question of Everlasting punishment seems indeed deplorable. Many preachers profess to believe in a doctrine which they, nevertheless, habitually ignore in their preaching, except for controversial purposes. Hell has ceased to be a fashionable topic in orthodox popular sermons, except for occasional reference to heretical Broad Churchmen, who are supposed to deny its existence. In reality, however, many Broad Churchmen lay far more stress on the certainty of Future punishment than do most of those who accuse them of heterodoxy. The reason for this is obvious. So long as Mediæval or Calvinistic views are accepted, the doctrine of Hell Fire so shocks modern intelligence and moral sentiment, that it is kept in the background, or only taught in such a way that members of the congregation can easily flatter themselves that they will not incur the dread penalty, and that consequently they may practically ignore the subject. Those who, on the other hand, think of Christ as the Saviour of the World, can speak frankly and

sternly of the certain punishment of sin, in this world and the next. They do not deny the existence of Hell, but they assert the possibility of Repentance after death.

The Christian revelation gives no details as to the conditions of the Future Life. The fundamental facts are, that we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, and that the blessing following on a favourable judgment, as also the curse following on an unfavourable verdict, are beyond anything we can conceive. Images and metaphors are used to help us to realize the meaning of the Blessing and the Curse ; but any attempt to treat these images as literal statements of fact, involves us in logical contradictions. Ecclesiastical writers have tried to work out a consistent system, under which there is a sort of preliminary judgment at the time of a man's death, after which he awaits, either in Paradise or in Hades, that final judgment which sends him to Heaven or to Hell. This view again is sometimes modified by the introduction of Purgatory as a third alternative to Paradise and Hades. Broad Churchmen, however, confess their complete ignorance about such matters, an ignorance which is nevertheless coupled with their complete assurance that God will do with us what is best and will finally bring about that restitution of all things ; the coming of the time when He shall be "all in all."

The doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body is often regarded as an assertion that the material particles of which our bodies are made, will come together at some future time. In this sense, such a doctrine could hardly be accepted by any Rationalist. Obviously the material particles of which our bodies are composed are constantly being changed, and have presumably made part of the bodies of many different men and women in other ages. But the essence of the belief lies in the Christian glorification of the body, as against its depreciation by many philosophies and religions. If man *is* a soul, and only *has* a body, it would be reasonable to assume that only the soul is immortal. But if the body be regarded as an underlying substance, not to be identified with its material particles, and if this underlying substance is as much part of a man as is his soul, then belief in its revivification is not illogical, especially as such revivification may be necessary for a complete continuance of personality. We know too little of man's nature, and especially of the relations between what we call Body and Soul, to be able to dogmatize upon the subject. The Christian doctrine is that the whole nature of Man, body and soul, or body, soul, and spirit, is sacred ; sanctified by Him Who for our sakes became Flesh, and instituted the Sacrament of His Body and Blood ; that the whole of this complex personality of Man has been redeemed by Christ, and will

not permanently be made subject to the powers of Death. In other words, the expression "Resurrection of the Body," refers to what St Paul calls the *spiritual body*, and not to the material flesh and blood which cannot inherit the Kingdom of Heaven.

To sum up: we may say that the Christian doctrine of a Future Life is not greatly concerned with metaphysical argument about the nature of the soul, and its relation to the body. It rests mainly upon Christian convictions about the Character of God. In this life, we fail to realize our ideals; and failing here, we fail completely, unless there be a Hereafter, where we may hope to advance further in our pursuit of the True, the Beautiful, and the Good. If God be such a God as Jesus revealed to us, we are justified in expecting such an opportunity to be given. Moreover, Death separates us from our beloved ones. We have a right to expect such a God as Jesus revealed, to restore us to one another. And again, if we have loved God, and above all, if He has loved us, He will surely not allow Death to separate us from Him for ever. Thus our Belief in a Future Life finds its logical basis on our belief in the Character of God, as revealed to us by Jesus Christ.

The teaching of Jesus on this subject seems to be limited to the following points: (a) The certainty of judgment. This is vividly represented by the

metaphor of a great Assize, with Christ as the Judge, and all men on their trial. (b) The principle upon which the judgment is based. Those who have served mankind by feeding the hungry, visiting the sick, and the like, are placed on the right hand, even though when so doing they knew not that they were ministering to Christ. Those who abstained from helping their fellows are placed on the left hand, even though they knew not that they were abstaining from serving Christ. They are plunged into Hell. (c) Hell is compared to the field into which the carcasses of criminals are flung, to be eaten by worms or consumed by fire. (d) Heaven is identified with the Kingdom of God, here on earth and also hereafter beyond the realms of time and space. (e) There will be an intermediate state, metaphorically described as Abraham's bosom, or Paradise. The penitent thief was to be with Christ in Paradise, before He rose from the Dead and ascended into Heaven. But hardly anything is said about the nature of this intermediate state, though the parable of Dives suggests that we shall know one another there, and that even a Dives, though plunged into Hell and excluded by an impassable gulf from Abraham's Bosom, may learn in Hell to pray for his brethren. (f) Christ expresses His doctrine of the Future Life in terms largely borrowed from Jewish ideas, which had grown up since the closing of the Old Testament Canon, in

what is known as the Apocalyptic literature. It is impossible to say whether Jesus accepted these ideas as literally accurate, or only used them as vivid metaphors, pointing to spiritual truths.

HEATHENDOM

BROAD Churchmen lay more stress upon the Good than upon the Bad in non-Christian religions. Such religions have generally won their way through what is true rather than through what is false in them ; and even when this is not so, the good is generally better worth studying than the bad. It comes, of course, from the Source of all Good, and may often throw light on Christian defects and on the dangers underlying our own theological notions.

No attempt can be made in these pages to review, however briefly, the great heathen religions. But a single one of them may be taken as an illustration of the Broad Church principle. Let us take the case of Hinduism :—the religion which is accepted by the largest section of our own fellow subjects. Hinduism is full of abuses and absurdities ; but it must have at least partially met human needs and helped human beings, otherwise it would not have lasted for more than three thousand years, and would not still be the religion of over two hundred million people. The system of Caste, which is an almost essential element in this religion, is obviously opposed to some of our strongest convictions. It

cannot be reconciled with human liberty, equality, or fraternity. But yet Hinduism has proved itself to be an organization capable of holding society together, and enabling a real, though defective, civilization to grow up and endure. It has done much to preserve a comparative purity of race and to keep alive, in the highest caste, a lofty Theism. It has successfully asserted the pre-eminence of Thought and Meditation in a world of sensualism and low cares. The amazing strength of the Caste system was seen in the failure of Buddhism to seriously affect it. Buddhism was undoubtedly a magnificent protest against the absurdities of Caste. It proclaimed the essential equality of men, except so far as ethical distinctions create a real aristocracy. For a time the good tidings of the individualistic gospel of Gautama seemed to be sweeping everything before it ; but in the long run, Hinduism proved to be too strong in India for the new religion, whose great victories were to be won elsewhere. To discuss the relative merits of these two religions is beyond the scope of this book. The question cannot, of course, be decided by the fact of the victory of the older creed ; yet its success must be taken to indicate at least a greater suitability to the people of India, and it may be well to note that recent research does not confirm the old tradition that Buddhism was stamped out by persecution.

Centuries later came the second great attack on

Hinduism. Islam like Buddhism involved a protest against Caste, but it was perhaps even more a protest against the idolatries which disfigured all but the highest caste, and against the Brahmin conception of the Supreme God. The Brahmins had practically identified their ultimate Deity with Thought. Islam viewed Him rather as Will. The Brahmin sought to identify himself with God by contemplation; the Mahomedan taught as practically the whole duty of man, submission to an absolute Will, altogether separate from himself. Islam was herein reviving Scriptural teaching, but laying upon Power that emphasis which the Old Testament laid upon Righteousness and the New Testament upon Love. But the Christian Churches with which Mahomedanism first came into contact were so absorbed in theological and ecclesiastical controversies, that they could not hold their own against the fervent faith in Allah, and the proclamation of the absolute duty of submission to His Will. Hinduism made a better stand against Islam. Many Hindus adopted the new faith, but these formed only a comparatively small minority. Here, again, it is difficult to say how far it was the good element in Hinduism which gave it the strength to resist. Mere conservatism counted for much; so did superstition and the self-interest of priests and of the higher castes; but we must notice that even the lower castes with their absurd myths and abominable rites have a religion

not destitute of profound moral elements. Notice first the respect of the lower castes for the Brahmins, the students, the men whose lives were dedicated to thought, and who submitted to poverty and austerities that they might pursue their aim more effectively, and ultimately become absorbed in the Being they worship, who is himself the Perfect Contemplation, the Glorious Student. No religion which maintains such a conviction of the right of Thinkers to dominate other classes can be altogether degraded. Notice next the doctrines of Karma and Metempsychosis. The ideal vocation is only for the highest caste, but those excluded from this are excluded on account of sins committed in a previous state of existence, and they can so live here as to be re-born hereafter in a higher class, from which they may gradually rise to the highest. The Hindu laws have a threefold purpose: (1) to maintain the purity of the highest caste; (2) to keep the lower castes in due subordination to the higher; (3) to so educate and discipline the former, that they may be new-born in their next stage of existence. The nobler elements of Hinduism are overlaid with mythologies, idolatries, absurdities, and iniquities, but a sympathetic student can see that there is much that is worthy, not only in the worship of Brahm, but also in that of Vishnu and Krishna; while various forms of Devil-worship through Siva and the like, bear witness to the pressure on the

Hindu of that problem of the existence of Evil, which the loftiest theism cannot solve, and which Pantheism only evades. How the belief in One Who holds the Keys of Hell and of the Grave can be effectively proclaimed among the Hebrew millions is a question for missionaries. Broad Churchmen do not profess to answer this question, but they insist that it cannot be answered by ignoring or by depreciating any element of good in Hinduism. Christians have to reveal Him Whom the Hindu already dimly worships, or at least gropes after, if haply he may find Him.

The case of Hinduism has, of course, only been taken as an illustration of a general principle; a principle which was certainly till a few years ago part of the special message of Broad Churchmen. Like other parts of their message, it is now largely accepted by many who would repudiate the title of Broad Churchmen; but even now it is often rather accepted as a principle than acted upon in practice.

NONCONFORMITY

IF we hold that even the Heathen religions have spread and maintained themselves rather by what is good in them than by what is bad, we naturally feel that this must be still more the case with Christian denominations, even with those of them towards which we feel least sympathy. Most of the sects came into existence by calling attention to truths which the Church was in danger of forgetting. Thus, in England, Presbyterianism was a protest against Episcopal subservience and Episcopal tyranny. An Elizabethan bishop was not only the Queen's nominee. He could practically be suspended at the Queen's pleasure; while a clergyman who offended the Bishop or the Government could be brought before a court in which his prosecutors were at once judges and jury. It is no answer to say that seventeenth-century Presbyterians were more intolerant than Episcopalians; but this fact helps to explain the growth of the Independent sects, with their claim to religious liberty. The Baptists added an important witness for Individualism. In postponing Baptism till a man was of an age to realize his responsibility for his belief and

conduct, they no doubt struck a blow at the social side of Christianity, but it was an assertion of other aspects which needed to be insisted upon. Above all, the Society of Friends came into existence to bear witness to the Inner Light ; and the way in which they were treated is a sufficient evidence of how little the authorities in Church and State remembered the opening verses of the Fourth Gospel. Similarly, at a later time, when the Church seemed to be becoming a mere department of the State, the Methodists revived spiritual fervour and evangelical zeal ; and the Unitarians made their protest against Bibliolatry and the Calvinistic views of Future Punishment and the Atonement. Even Calvinism usefully called attention to the fundamental division between the sheep and the goats, and to the fact that Salvation must ultimately rest on the absolute Will of God. No doubt it seems clear to us that such a Salvation involves a momentous choice in answer to the demand for voluntary self-sacrifice. But its ultimate source is the Will of God. Calvin did not believe that God's Will to save applied to the whole of humanity. Nevertheless the positive side of his teaching was not only true but infinitely important. It was the negative side—Reprobation, as against Election—that was horrible. In this he resembled most Heresiarchs. Their affirmations are sound ; their negations are false.

Such considerations make Broad Churchmen especially tender towards schismatics. They realize, moreover, that when a sect has once become established, it tends to become a Church. Originally a grouping together of Christians, with no better bond than common opinions, it tends to become a brotherhood, with historical and personal associations ; a sort of family, with a continuous existence glorified by the sanctities and pieties of the Past. Broad Churchmen are sometimes accused of regarding every religion as about as good as the rest. This is a travesty of their attitude. This whole book is an attempt to show that Broad Churchmen have a definite theology. Yet they do certainly regard some other things as of more importance than mere opinions. Pure religion and undefiled consists of active beneficence and personal purity ; of the fraternal attitude and the Upward Look. It cannot therefore be limited to any one sect. Men can worship acceptably on a mountain or in a temple, at High Mass, or in a Friend's Meeting-House ; but if their worship is to be real worship, it must be worship in Spirit and in Truth.

The problem of Reunion is full of difficulties. An individual Nonconformist who becomes a Churchman has often to violate tender and sacred associations. On the other hand, Corporate Reunion is so greatly beset with such practical diffi-

culties that it must, for the present, be regarded as an unattainable Ideal. Much may be done to cultivate a Unity of Spirit and a co-operation in good work. Every honest effort against harsh judgment and against spiritual exclusiveness is a help in this direction. We must never forget that Christ prayed that His followers should form one single Flock.

Proposals for an exchange of pulpits, for joint worship, and for the throwing open of the Holy Communion in certain circumstances to Nonconformists, raise other practical difficulties. Some of these difficulties are no doubt consequent upon what Broad Churchmen regard as superstitions; but we are bound to be at least as tender towards "weaker brethren" within the Church as towards Nonconformists. The fact that the adoption of such proposals would probably drive many High Churchmen out of the Anglican Church cannot be lightly regarded. More harm than good might be done to the cause of Unity. But even apart from this, it must be remembered that anything short of Corporate Re-Union, or at least of full inter-Communion, leaves us with the division of Christianity into sects; and so long as that division remains there remains also the duty of protesting against it. Any policy that seems to assume that such divisions do not matter is to be deprecated. These remarks are only intended to point out certain difficulties

in proposals which have been warmly supported by some Broad Churchmen, but as strongly opposed by others. It is against the purpose of this book, which aims simply at expounding Broad Church views, to take a side, when Broad Churchmen differ from one another.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN STATE SCHOOLS

TO the religious, Religious Education appears of paramount importance. Intellectual education is far less valuable than the training of the Emotions and of the Will. Physical Education is desirable, but a child whose physique has been neglected may grow up to be a saint. A materialistic age, with its gospel of "getting on," is not much concerned with the making of saints; but even material success depends not a little upon *character*. If a man uses his strength in violence or his intellect in swindling, that strength and intellect were not worth developing.

Notice, however, that religion is not necessarily advanced by what is usually called Religious Education. You can teach the contents of the Bible or the Creed in ways that will hinder rather than help the growth of religion in those whom you are teaching. It is doubtful whether religion can effectively be taught, except by the religious. Children unconsciously recognize divergence between the lesson and the teacher, and they are not likely to attach weight to the former if they imagine that the latter cares

little about it. And even if the teacher is religious, the religious lesson may be given in vain. Clergymen's sons are often said to fall below others of the same class in religion or morality. This is perhaps a mistaken generalization, based on the fact that such divergence from the expected, attracts special notice, but the fact that such an opinion is widely held, suggests at least that, with the best intentions, a religious person may do more harm than good by what he supposes to be lessons in religion.

The "man of the world" is generally in favour of Religious Education in Elementary schools, even if he is indifferent about it in his own family. He supposes that those moral qualities to which he attaches some importance can best be inculcated, at anyrate in the case of the poor, by religious teaching. "Let them learn about Hell, so that they may be afraid to steal my spoons or promote revolutions. The belief in a Future Life may help to make them acquiesce in the inequalities of this world, from which I and mine profit." It is questionable, however, whether any real morality can be based on theology. To the Broad Churchman, at anyrate, it seems clear that this is an inversion of the right order. He prefers to begin with morality and to base theology thereupon. A child can realize that Goodness is an End in itself, because in the child there is a divine nature, a reason and a conscience. Once make the idea of Rewards and

Punishments the motive for morality, and the morality ceases to be genuinely moral. If, on the other hand, you begin by inspiring a love of the Good and the True, you may hope that the child will go on to discover in Christian theology some correspondence to its ideals.

These and other considerations greatly complicate the problem of Religious Education, and especially of that portion of it which is a burning political question in England and in many other countries : the question whether Religious Education should form part of the curriculum in State Schools. Broad Churchmen differ widely from one another on this point, and it may help to throw light on Broad Church points of view if we briefly examine these divergent attitudes.

One Broad Churchman advocates the system of *Undenominational* religious teaching. "It is evident," he says, "that the principal Christian denominations have much common ground in the religious opinions they hold. You can teach a child much about God and about Christ, about the Bible and a Future Life, without introducing controversial points ; and fortunately, it is just these fundamental doctrines that a child can best understand. You can teach the meaning of the Lord's Prayer or of the parable of the Prodigal Son, without entering upon the differences between Church and Chapel. If you wish to bring out some

ecclesiastical ideas in connexion with the prayer or the parable, you can surely leave this supplementary work to the clergy and the Sunday-school, if the parents are unwilling or unable to undertake the task. Meanwhile the common lessons will have borne witness to the fact that our unhappy divisions have not annihilated our common heritage."

A Broad Churchman who supports *Denominational* Religious Education answers in effect: "You are making too much of mere opinions. It is well no doubt to tell children that they have a common Father, and that if they depart from Him He invites them to return. But the Church is something more than a champion of beliefs, the most important of which it shares with outsiders. In country districts especially, the close connexion between School and Church helps to keep alive the idea of God's family. It promotes friendly relations between different classes; the parson and his family are brought by it into connexion with the teachers, the pupil-teachers, and the children. All parties gain from this intercourse, and the relationships that result from it. No doubt, the present system involves in some cases genuine grievances to Nonconformists, but these might be removed. Let Nonconformists have a right of access to the Church schools. Let them give their own lessons in the Church school, where no other exists; and where there are undenominational schools, let a similar access be

allowed, with such limitations as seem necessary. Why should a particular form of religion—Un-denominational Christianity—have a monopoly, even when parents wish for something different.”

A Broad Churchman who favours the so-called *Secular* system, while admitting the force of these contentions, deprecates the underlying assumption that what are called secular subjects are secular in the narrow sense of the word. There is of course a secularity that has to be incessantly fought against : the secularity that is opposed to the things of the Spirit ; the attitude of mind which cares for only so much of education as will help children to get on in the world, or will help employers to pile up fortunes through the increased efficiency of their workpeople. Literature, History, and Science are not merely secular. Literature may be defined so as to include everything that is worth writing if it be well written. History is the record of human virtues and vices, of the qualities that have made nations great, or brought about their fall. Science is the study of the ways in which God works in the physical realm. To regard such things as purely secular is to accept Satan’s claim that all the kingdoms of the earth are his ; *i.e.* if the word secular be taken as the antithesis to *spiritual*. On the other hand it seems doubtful whether what are usually called “ religious ” lessons can profitably be given under the conditions which exist in our Elementary schools. Many of

those who have passed through such schools look back with profound distaste to the so-called religious lessons. Trades Union Congresses have again and again demanded the secularization of the schools, and if they have now discontinued this demand, it is simply on the ground that the question does not properly come under the cognizance of such congresses. No doubt among those who support the "secular" claim there are infidels and indifferentists; but there are also many, who speaking from their own experience, do not consider that the secularization of the schools would be unfavourable to true religion. Even in public schools, the Divinity lesson is frequently in reality a lesson in Literature or Criticism or History, or it may be in Hellenistic Greek; and this even when the masters are in Holy Orders. These men feel, for the most part, that teaching "religion" is not a thing to be done by formal lesson on the subject. They believe that Public Schools are great schools of character, training boys to serve God in Church and in State; but few, even of those who advocate Religious Education, attribute to the Divinity Classes any very large share in bringing about this result. A purely secular school like that connected with University College, London, claims that its "tone" is at least as high as that of similar schools on "religious" foundations.

There are, of course, things connected with theology that can be taught to classes of children;

but such classes should be organized and taught by religious people, leaving the State to undertake physical, intellectual, and moral education, apart from all religious sanctions. It is at least possible that teachers will feel more than ever bound to put the training of character first among their duties, when it is not specially connected with one single item of the Time Table, but must somehow be promoted even in connexion with subjects commonly called secular. To discipline the Will, to call forth Admiration, to deepen the Feelings and encourage the Affections can only properly be called Secular by those who use the word Secular as inclusive of much that is spiritual. The Secular solution of the problem need not involve the exclusion of the Bible from Elementary schools. The teachers could no longer teach that Jesus is God, or is not God ; but they could still try to teach the Gospel story in such a way as to touch the hearts and imaginations of young children. They could still find in Old Testament and New Testament alike, means of thrilling their pupils with noble emotions, even though they had to leave the teaching of dogmas to the Churches.

SOCIALISM

RELIGION starts with the individual soul, but finds itself almost at once obliged to regard that individual in its relation to other souls and bodies. A good Christian who is a bad son, a bad husband, a bad father, or a bad citizen would evidently be a contradiction in terms. This has always been recognized, so far as the Family relationships are concerned. With regard, however, to the duties of Citizenship, the Early Church was at first almost silent. This is no doubt partly to be accounted for by the facts relating to the position of the early Christians. They were not only too few and too weak to carry out Social or Political Reform. They were also members of a Heathen State, and bound by their religion to violate some of its laws and to denounce some of its customs. At first they made a heroic effort to combine such violations and denunciations with a real loyalty to the Roman Empire. They tried to render to Cæsar his dues, and to remember that the powers that be are ordained by God. But when Cæsarism passed into Cæsar-worship, the task became almost impossible. To the greatest of the Apocalyptic writers, Rome was

“Babylon!” the type of brute force, or brutal competition and brutal confusion. The Emperor became “the beast.” The author of the Apocalypse exulted over the coming Fall of Babylon, and the coming overthrow of the Beast.

When the Empire became nominally Christian, the attitude of Christians was naturally modified. The Church began to take an active part in politics. It, to some extent, protected the Poor from their oppressors. It helped to abolish slavery. It mitigated the rigidity of Feudalism, and contributed some moral and spiritual elements to Chivalry and to medieval industrialism. It also built up the Political Ideal of Christendom, as an organized society with its two heads:—the Pope and the Emperor. The reality did not of course conform to this Ideal. There were generally two emperors prior to the Fall of Constantinople; and there were occasionally rival Popes. This, however, was a comparatively small matter, as was also the fact that Pope and Emperor were often opposed to one another. The real difficulty lay in the fact that emperors and popes alike fell so far short of the ideal, that Christians had frequently to rebel against both the secular and the spiritual potentate. Hence came Democracy and Protestantism. But it was soon seen that something more than the removal of Governors was needed. Neither the Reformation nor the progress of liberty and self-government

purified Society or made its spirit less opposed to the spirit of Christianity.

Meanwhile a new form of despotism grew up, in the modern Industrial System, based on competition and giving to the propertied and directing classes a monstrous power of oppression. This industrial system is our modern "Babylon." Apart from modifications introduced by Philanthropy and by laws passed in the spirit of Christianity, it would probably be the worst Babylon that the world has ever seen. In spite of the before-mentioned modifications, we can see its fruits in the slums of our great cities, in drunkenness and prostitution, in ill-fed children, in sweated womanhood, in men willing to work but unable to find employment. It would be unfair to attribute such things entirely to our dominant Industrial system. Poverty, extreme poverty has existed in all ages and in all countries, sometimes in combination with the extreme wealth of individuals. But certainly, in no period before our own has there been such a plethora of wealth combined with such depths of poverty. We have abolished slavery, but only to substitute another form of servitude, almost as fatal to real liberty, and to a rational existence; demoralizing to Rich and Poor alike.

It is easier to criticize our Social system than to indicate the appropriate remedies. From the point of view of this book, it has to be admitted that

Broad Churchmen are not agreed upon a Social Policy. They have certainly taken a leading part in the building up of palliative measures. Thus, in the department of Working Class and Female Education, they originated in Great Ormond Street and in the Queen's College, Institutions which have since been imitated with more or less modification all over the country. Similarly, in the matter of Settlements, the Broad Churchman who started Toynbee Hall was setting an example which has been very widely followed, not only in England, but in the United States, in the Colonies, and in some Continental countries. Schemes of Old Age Pensions and of State Insurance were advocated by Broad Churchmen before they were taken up by practical politicians. Something of the same sort may be said of the Penny Dinners which preluded systems for feeding necessitous children out of public funds. The Co-operative societies instituted by Maurice, Kingsley, and other Broad Churchmen proved too much in advance of their time ; but some of their features have now been satisfactorily worked out in the great Co-operative Movement.

I have no intention of claiming in such matters any sort of monopoly for Broad Churchmen, or even for Christians. Robert Owen would have disclaimed either title. Many Agnostics have done splendid work in Social Reform. The services of the Evangelical Lord Shaftesbury, and the fine

energy of High Churchmen in the carrying out of schemes for the amelioration of the condition of the people must never be forgotten. But Broad Churchmanship, by reason of its rejection of authority, combined with its Christianity, is perhaps specially adapted for approaching the new problems in the Spirit of Christ. Neither the Bible writers nor the early Church had to deal with the special difficulties growing out of modern industrialism. They therefore naturally could only contribute to the solution of such problems by laying down principles, of which the correct application to modern questions is often difficult to determine.

But with all their advantages, it must be repeated that Broad Churchmen still lack a Social Policy. The complexity of the reactions set a-working both by philanthropic and legislative schemes may perhaps explain this shortcoming. The Reason and the Conscience are perplexed by the fact that modifications of environment have unexpected results. They may interfere with healthy growths. They may encourage the survival of the unfittest. They may injure the sense of responsibility and other important elements of the Christian character. Accordingly we find Broad Churchmen among Socialists and among Anti-Socialists. The one position which they cannot consistently hold is that of acquiescence in the existing Social Evils. If they do not see their way to join as yet in the

fight against Poverty, they are bound at least to be asking themselves how they can do so advantageously. In this respect, their position differs somewhat from that of the other schools of thought. Evangelicals can find texts which seem to assert that Poverty is a result of the Divine Will, and is to be permanently with us. Catholics have always glorified Holy Poverty, and might be excused for failing to realize that most of our poverty is the reverse of Holy. But those who make appeal directly to their reason and conscience, can hardly doubt that the kind of Poverty that exists to-day both in the slums of our towns and in the cottages of our peasants, is a thing to be unceasingly fought against.

The differing attitudes of different Broad Churchmen towards Socialistic proposals are largely due to their recognition of the vital importance and sacredness of Individuality. No change of environment would be sufficient compensation for the impoverishment of the Soul. The first way to test Socialistic proposals is by their probable effects upon human character. Will they encourage self-reliance or greed or industry, or a sense of solidarity? Will they encourage Literature, Art, or Science? Will they help men to look Upwards rather than Downwards? The subordinate test of Socialistic proposals is a materialistic one. Will they really promote a juster distribution of wealth without

unduly encroaching on the total wealth that has to be distributed? Both these tests are very difficult to apply, but difficulties exist in order to be attacked and surmounted.

One other fact has to be constantly borne in mind. The character of man is capable of great modification. Schemes which have worked badly in the Past may therefore work well in the altered conditions of the Future. Everything which improves the moral and intellectual conditions of individuals makes them more fit for citizenship in the True City of God, wherein all shall work according to their power, and receive according to their needs. Theologies which set up the Bible or the Church as Infallible Authorities, are likely to forget the fact that changing conditions necessitate changes of policy. Evangelicals and Catholics alike must recognize the Progressive character of God's revelations, if they are to deal successfully with Social Problems; and these new revelations must come to them through their reason and Conscience.

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